

BISHOP BOSSUET
AND THE FOUR ARTICLES OF GALLICANISM

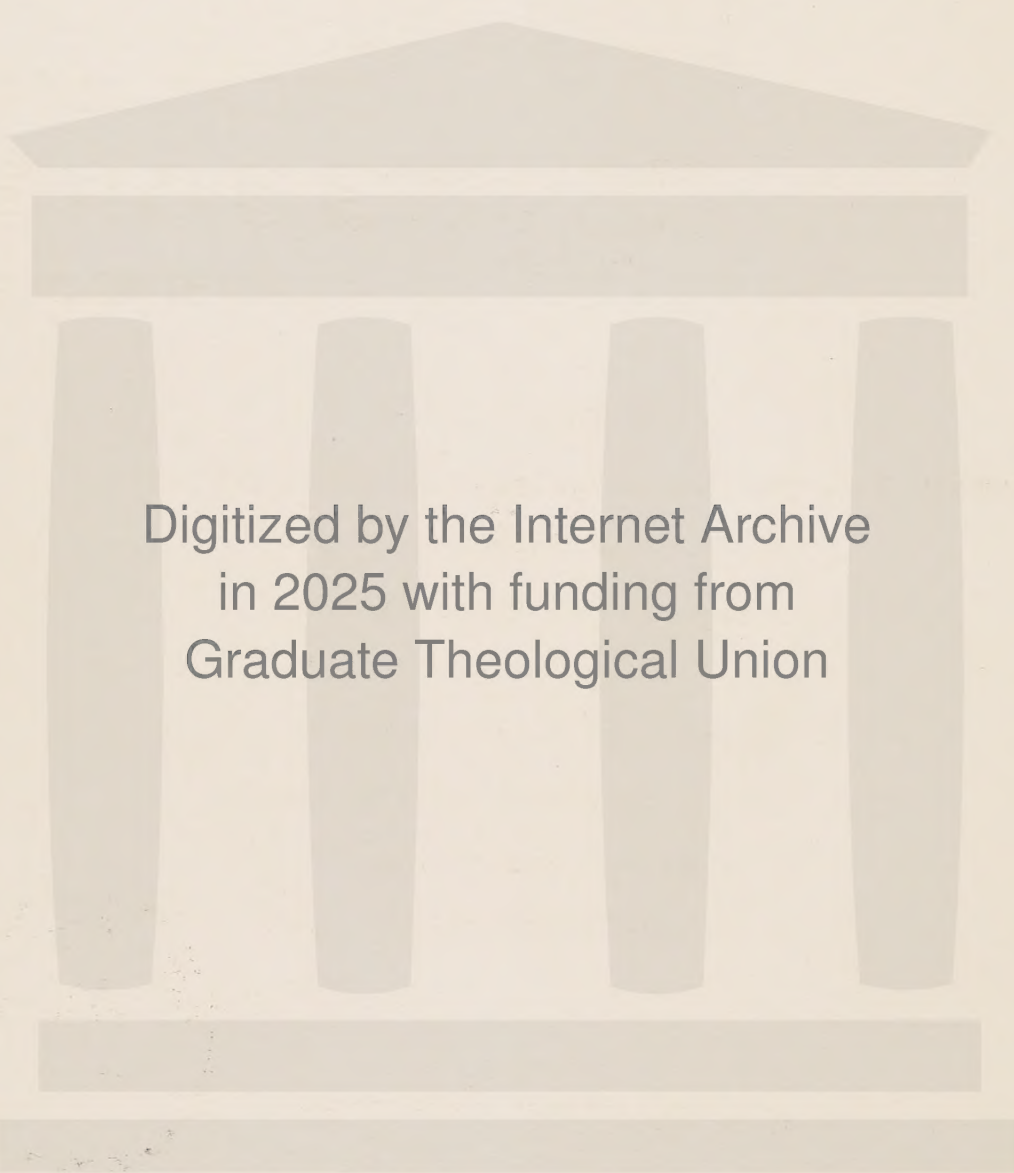
John Morton Gallop

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BISHOP BOSSUET
AND THE FOUR ARTICLES OF GALLICANISM

by

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INTRODUCTION

I

The proclamation in 1870 of the Dogma of Papal Infallibility was but the logical conclusion to a logical historical development. This is generally granted by most, whether one agree with the primary premise or not, but what perhaps is most interesting and certainly less well noticed, is how the movement is logical not alone on the theological or dogmatic side, but also in the "religio-political" sphere, where the lines of demarkation between what is secular and what is sacred disappear and the idea becomes the dominant ruling force. It was not by accident that the Infallibility decree should be announced (symbolically at least) almost upon the departure of French troops from Italy, the collapse of the Papal temporal authority, and the proclamation of the new Kingdom of Italy. It was likewise not without "cosmic" implications that, close upon the heels of Mussolini's march on Rome and the disappearance of the old regime so closely tied to the Church, that the Feast of Christ the King should be enunciated. The Pope as representative of this King rules the temporal sphere on earth, as He representing Christ the Saviour, rules likewise the Spiritual realm. But what has been compensated for in theory and idea, can but serve the more direct purpose of pointing up how impotent the modern Papacy is (almost by analogy with Boniface VIII) the more extensive and all-embracing the claims to authority.

The historical opposition to such an over-developed papal system is well known to the average layman - the schism between East and West being understood in this light, though of course the issues are beclouded for the Roman laity. Likewise the revolt of the English Church against papal domination. What is more puzzling, however, and a point wherein the modern Romanist is generally misinformed, if not entirely ignorant, is the historical revolt of the great Catholic nation of France. This opposition was at once strong and far-reaching in its effect; that it was dissipated and has been largely forgotten remains one of those problems of history that serve the scholar well for research topics. But the matter does not deserve this fate, for the reason that just as the West has been kept ignorant of the Catholicity of the Eastern Orthodox Churches that there might be a dichotomy between "Catholic" (Roman) and "Protestant," so in this area, the matter is never referred to or else in a manner which thoroughly discredits the movement and the great men who took part in it.

In a sense this present study has the ulterior motive of presenting such anti-papal propaganda, but it is done with a sense of obligation to historical facts which often are too easily brushed aside when religious emotions attempt to present the case for an exalted Papacy. Naturally, the whole sweep of Medieval and Modern History should come into view, since the movement began in France, as well as in England, far back in the national development. But such is not feasible here, and since the entire course of the French opposition is so admirably summarized and brought to a focal point in the

seventeenth century in the relations between Louis XIV and the great Bishop Bossuet, who himself drew up the formula since known as the "Gallican Liberties," we feel justified in setting limitations.

A word of caution must be entered here, before we begin; as we are taught that there is rightly no division between the parts of God's creation, between what is sacred and what profane, the more so in this case. For in the realm where the idea dominates, there cannot be such a division, which fact forms the background obviously for all the struggles between papal and temporal powers. If then we have occasion to make excursions into what may seem political (secular) areas, we can but plead for a proper understanding, that the temporal governance becomes in the ideal merely one aspect of the divine administration of the earthly kingdom, wherein both Emperor and Pope are one.

The Gallican Liberties were certain rights in which most Frenchmen took an intense pride. They were peculiar to France; and, as the Crown lawyers said, they had never actually been granted in the form of a privilege, but grew up in the very nature of things. They consisted chiefly in four points: first, that Papal bulls might not come into France without permission from the Crown; second, that the decisions of the Roman Congregations had no legal weight in France; third, that French subjects should not be cited before a Roman tribunal; and, fourth, that French civil courts took cognizance of ecclesiastical affairs whenever the law of the land was thought to be broken. Since Catholicism was part of the common law, the Parlements could, and did, give this last article a very wide extension.

The French clergy might put up with the Parlements easily enough; the only alternative was an appeal to Rome, if such were legal, and to them the Roman Court was scandalous by its pettiness and neglect of spiritual duty. Such an attitude inspired a strong dislike of the doctrine of papal infallibility. From the point of dogma, most Frenchmen considered it definitely unhistorical and opposed to the ancient traditions of the Church. In the administrative realm, it would mean a revolution. Once infallibility was admitted, appeals without number would be encouraged by Rome removing cases from their own competent tribunals. But this was not the worst, for Cardinal Bellarmin who began the agitation for papal infallibility had added to the theological dogma a series of political consequences that were impossible of acceptance by the French nation. Such for instance, that ecclesiastical interests took precedence of all other interests, and of these the Pope alone was judge and by implication had the right to dictate his will to temporal sovereigns. Much of this discussion was kept within the academic halls, and the government ministers knew that such theories could not unseat a French king, but it did encourage internal discord and in the case of the great prelates, Richelieu and his successors, they in particular meant to be free from any such embarrassing restrictions. Hence there was a real need for some political theory that would bind the consciences of all Frenchmen to obey no master but their king.¹

¹ For the best brief summary of these introductory matters, see: Cambridge Modern History, Vol. V, pp. 74-76. Cf., Rev. W. H. Jervis, History of the Church of France (London: John Murray, 1872).

Such a theory was to be had in "Gallicanism" which might best be described as a sort of generalization from the ancient Gallican Liberties that served to offset the development of Ultramontanism.² Two aspects must be distinguished, however: Theological Gallicanism which upheld the principle that the authority of the Church had been committed to Pope and Bishop equally, and Political Gallicanism which vehemently decried any interference by the Pope in temporal affairs. In a sense these two had grown up independently, yet in the period of which we speak they had been fused together by a famous doctor of the Sorbonne, Edmon Richer.³ From the point of view of politics, and statesmen as Richelieu and Colbert, Gallicanism served as a convenient tool for putting down clerical opposition; but it was the work of Richer and his followers who saw in the principle a means of solving the age-old problem of a divided allegiance.

The entire problem must of necessity be set into the framework of the new era that was dawning. The Wars of Religion had most naturally been followed by a reaction towards national unity, not unlike the movement in England subsequent to the Wars of the Roses, under the Tudors. It was precisely this type of movement that the Ultramontanists desired to check, since such could only be seen as "separatist" in its intent,

² The term "Gallican Liberties" has come to be applied specifically to the formula of 1682, although this is but a summary of "Liberties" maintained in France for many centuries.

³ Richer was responsible for the famous Six Articles, of which more anon. See: E. Puyol, Edmond Richer (Paris: 1876); Cf., E.K. Sanders, J.B. Bossuet (London: 1921), pp. 177-180.

and detrimental to the interests of the Papacy. The best indication of just how far Gallicanism did go, can best be seen in the fact that it infected even the Jesuits. In the quarrel between Louis XIV and Innocent XI, the Society was among the strongest supporters of the Crown. But all of this is by way of anticipation; to get at the problem correctly, it will be necessary to return for a moment and trace out as far as possible the individual factors as they constitute the background of the struggle in which Bishop Bossuet was to play such a prominent part.

BOSSUET AND THE MONARCHY

II.

The France that Louis XIV came to rule in 1661 stood at the threshold of her most glorious days. But while it was the young king himself who set the stage destined throughout his lifetime to be the center of universal attraction and envy, and upon which he was to be the principle actor, he had a good foundation already prepared by his predecessors. Not only had the statesmanship and insatiable ambition of Richelieu assured a commanding position for France through the settlement of Westphalia, but internally as well his strong hand had removed many threats to stable government, while his successor Cardinal Mazarin had crushed the first demands for political and social reform, the War of the Fronde. The fact of the existence of a French nation, was a factor not to be overlooked. This institution of the national state, although likewise flourishing in Spain and England, seemed first to have taken root in France, and it had been in the struggles with the Popes which left Germany divided and weak and turned England into a Papal fief, that France under Philip IV successfully defied the Papacy and bent it to national ends. In the Middle Ages, Law and the Church had been supreme, not the King; but the revolution, that eventually came as the Protestant Reformation, broke the authority of the Universal Church. The newer theories of church and state brought one of the most violent periods of civil war to France, but in a nation already devoted to a policy of "gallicanism" they served especially to complete the establishment of the independent sovereign, and pave the

way for a developed theory of divine right.⁴

The idea of divine right of kings had grown slowly and naturally in France out of those complexities of national development which had so early elevated the Capetians, and had thwarted even the ambitions of Innocent III. Whether or not upon close analysis this doctrine found its origins with the theologians or with the people (i.e., Gallicans, Parliamentarians, and Protestants) as a counter thrust against Papal authority, does not affect the final result. The independence of Richelieu or Mazarin, or the eloquence of Bossuet in his role of court preacher, all "gallican" at heart, were sufficient to assure success had not the French monarchy already possessed ample precedent.⁵ Suger, the Abbot of Saint-Denis, had represented Louis VI (1108-37) as carrying within himself the "living image of God," and the political theorist Bodin had maintained

⁴ In England this had been accomplished as the result of an expedient to meet religious difficulties. To support the king in his new position the Henrician political writers broke with medieval tradition altogether, teaching not only a doctrine of non-resistance as essential to the security of the state, but setting up the King as God's vice-regent on earth. See: Franklin le van Baumer, The Early Tudor Theory of Kingship (New Haven: 1940), p. 85. In France the development took in the end a more precise form, though it had had an earlier beginning and was more gradual in coming to fruition as the divine right monarchy.

⁵ Taine maintained that the theory had been forged by the theologians. See: Ancien Régime (tr. by John Durand; N.Y.: 1876), I, p. 124. Funk-Bretano in subsequent researches, has claimed that "the theory of divine right was created by the people to combat the theologians. It was the doctrine of the gallicans and parliamentarians. It had been defended with the greatest energy by the Protestants, and attacked by the Ultramontains and by the Jesuits." He quotes from Jurieu, who addressing the king, stated that, "There is not a Protestant in the realm who does not venerate, and I say, adore Your Majesty as the most brilliant image that God has himself placed on earth." See: Funk-Bretano, L'Ancienne France (Paris: 1913), pp. 181-83.

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Reformation, The Early Years, 1517-1547* (New Haven:
1940), p. 100. The French Reformation was in the end a more
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⁵ Faine maintained that the theory had been forced by the
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that, "The King is the image of God on earth."⁶ It remained for the Parlement of Paris in 1643 to direct still more affirmatively the statement to Louis XIV that, "The throne of Your Majesty represents for us the throne of the living God.... The Estates of the realm, render honour and respect to you as to a visible divinity." There had even been an attempt by the Estates General in 1614 (the last before 1789), to enroll among the "fundamental laws of the realm" an article declaring the divine power of the kings.⁷ While the measure failed of support then, the idea by the very fact that it had been suggested, held men's attention and as M. Hanotaux has stated, "it was engraved henceforth in the hearts of all Frenchmen, and through the triumph of gallicanism, the maxim of divine right became the touch-stone of patriotism."⁸

Louis XIV thus had at hand an impressive array of evidence upon which to base any claim to superior authority, either over the nation or the Papacy; but if this was wanting in effectiveness because it had not been concisely formulated, the support he received from Bishop Bossuet supplied what was lacking.

⁶ See Suger's Vie de Louis VI, quoted by Funk-Bretano, op. cit., p. 174: "...partem Dei cujus ad vivificandum portat rex imaginem." See also p. 175, for the quotation from Bodin's Les Six Livres (1576).

⁷ The debate over this point, made by the various Estates, is the chief proof adduced by Funk-Bretano in support of his thesis. There may be noted that the Third Estate originated and supported the proposal, but that the Clergy, having examined it, resolved that it could not be accepted, to which the Nobility accorded assent. See: Funk-Bretano, op. cit., p. 183. The whole is taken from the report noted by Richelieu in his Memoires (ed. Michaud, I, p. 79).

⁸ Gabriel Hanotaux, Richelieu (Paris: 1910), II, pp. 32-34.

that, "This thing is too big to be done by one man."

For the purpose of this study, the following will be

discussed: the treatment of Louis XIV, the French of
the French Revolution, and the French of the living French....

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Jacques Benigne Bossuet was born at Dijon in 1627 of a family of considerable respectability, his father being Councillor to the Parlement of Metz. Entrusted to the care of an uncle, he began at the Jesuit College at Dijon a scholarly career which, due to his extraordinary talents, was continued with brilliant success at Paris. Having received his Doctorate and being ordained, he became attached to the Cathedral in Metz where he discharged his duties with unusual seriousness and piety for that day. Here he began his long and notable career as an author, but he had already been marked out by the brilliance of his oratory. Summoned to Paris in 1659 to preach, the fame of his performance soon came to the attention of the King before whom he was honored to deliver a sermon in 1661. Appointed Bishop of Condom in 1669, he retired from this post when the position of tutor to the Dauphin was bestowed upon him. With an influential position at Court assured, Bossuet came to rule in political and religious circles as well as the literary. Created Bishop of Meux in 1682, he was thus in a position to dominate the proceedings of the French Church in the struggle with the Papacy.⁹ It is to Bossuet also, that one must look for the most thorough and most explicit expose of the theory of divine right, and this based upon theological not political principles.

⁹ For the best modern biographies see: W.H.S. Simpson, A Study of Bossuet (London: 1937), and E.K. Sanders, op. cit. The standard authority is still L.F. Bausset, Histoire de Bossuet (Paris: 1846); Bossuet's writings have been published in the Oeuvres Complete, edited by F. Lachat (Paris: Louis Vives, 1864), 32 volumes, and the correspondence edited by C. Urbain and E. Levesque, Correspondance de Bossuet (Paris: Hachette, 1905-1924), 15 volumes.

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Unfortunately Bossuet's work has often found disfavour, because he occupied a position of such singular influence at Court. But whether he was truly dazzled by the spectacle he beheld, or that he was simply the dupe of what he adored, does not affect the result. He must be accorded a proper place in the important line of political theorists who, like Hobbes his contemporary, and his successors Voltaire and Rousseau, attempted to solve the problem of men's political life in a manner sufficient for the time.¹⁰ Such a task was particularly difficult, since not only were the problems of the relations between Church and State deeply affected by the Protestant Reformation, and in France particularly so through the added problem of "gallicanism," but men were also seeking to apply the new ideas of the universe and man's relationship to it derived through the work of Newton, Kepler, and other scientists, to the problems of living together. For Hobbes, Bossuet's contemporary, absolute monarchy might be the only form of government that could stand in the place of the moral law, but with Bossuet it must not only be absolute, but of divine origin. The problem of course is not one divorced from the legitimate bounds of the theologian; the problems faced

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Bossuet's ideas on politics were expressed in many different forms; he was court preacher, and tutor to the Dauphin which afforded him many opportunities. Besides this he wrote an important work on political theory, based upon theological principles, entitled Politique Tirée des Propres Paroles de l'Écriture Saints (this appears as volumes 23 and 24 of the Oeuvres Complete). Written between 1675 and 1680 while still tutor at court, it was not published until after Bossuet's death, in 1704, but the ideas had been verbally pronounced throughout a long life. Translations from the Politique are made by the present writer.

by Bossuet and others of his time, find their counterpart in the struggle of the modern church to find some solution to the social, economic and political problems of the day in the light of the Christian ideal.

It was essentially the moral force that is lacking in Hobbes, that Bossuet makes the foundation of his thesis; whereas the basis of society for the one is merely fear and self-interest, for the other it becomes universal brotherhood.¹¹ Government is not only established to assure the proper interest of individuals, but to maintain the union, the concord and the amity among men. For Hobbes the source of sovereignty lay with the people who through a form of contract created the sovereign; for Bossuet this could never be, since all power had come from God in the beginning. The power and authority that men possess are merely emanations of this first power, and are legitimate only as they represent it. All governments are therefore of divine right, for all are permitted by God, and please Him only in the bit of His authority they contain. Of all the forms of government, however, there was only one that was best and the most natural. This was monarchy which had its foundation in the paternal government which God first established on earth in nature.¹⁰ The paternal government accustomed men at

¹¹ Politique, Book I, Article 1, proposition iii. "All men are brothers; first, they are all children of the same God...."

¹² Ibid., II, 3, 1. God created Eve subject to Adam, and their first son, Cain, had been thus begotten under the same authority. Both held the child from God, and the government over him. The commandment "Honour thy Father..." is but the consequence of the obedience which one must render to God, who is the true Father. Thus the first authority, the first idea of commandment which came to men, was paternal authority.

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the same time to have but one head, since God was not only the Father of all men, but the first king, and had visibly manifested His rule in the world.¹² Monarchy was thus the best form of government, because it was the oldest, and also because it was the most natural and consequently the most durable.¹³ "It is thus the most opposed to division, which is the most essential evil of States, and the most certain cause of their ruin; conforming to that saying: "Every kingdom divided against itself shall come to desolation...."

From the point of view of the universal (as opposed to the particular) the problem of origins becomes vastly more important than might be thought at first glance. Indeed it makes all the difference in the world whether authority be derived from above (by deduction) or from below (by induction), from a God-given source which carries with it divine sanction for law and order for jurisdiction and power, or from the people as constituents of a government "deriving its just powers from the consent of the governed." Bossuet hold true to the medieval conception of authority, as indeed he must,

¹² "God has exercised visibly by Himself the government and authority over men.....He was at this time (the beginning of the world) the sole king of men..... He gave to Adam the precept which pleased him.....He banished him; He denounced him.....He declared Himself visibly in favour of the sacrifice of Abel instead of that of Cain.....It is He who establishes the Kings.....thus it is that the throne of the kings of Israel is called the throne of God. 'Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord, and he pleased all; and all Israel obeyed him.' (I Chron. XXIX:23)." See: Politique, II, 1, ii.

¹³ Ibid., II, 1, vii. "The people of Israel came themselves to monarchy as being the government universally accepted.... Men are born subjects: and the paternal government, which accustoms them to obey, accustoms them at the same time to have but one head...."

for upon this very principle depends the authority of the Papacy as well as the monarch by divine right. Such a principle stands in opposition to the essentially "Nominalist" position which reduces authority to derived powers, or seeks to introduce an idea of "contract" between equals.¹⁴ But Bossuet stands equally in opposition to the Papacy, because this view holds that the kingly power is derived from God as well, and because of it there can be no idea that the spiritual sword is greater than the temporal one.

For the present work, however, the most important aspect of this doctrine is in Bossuet's treatment of royal authority generally, and the prerogatives of the divine right monarch. Above all, royal authority was sacred. This was derived not only from the agreed premise that all power came from God in the beginning, but also from the authority of St. Paul when he said that the prince was "God's minister," His lieutenant on earth.¹⁵ It was through the prince that God exercised His authority on earth, as He once did visibly Himself, and thence

¹⁴ Bossuet rejects absolutely the idea of "pacts" or of a "Social Contract" and it is just this which separates him from Hobbes. Bossuet, on the contrary, sees in the natural relation of things, and in the essential order of creatures, the reason for their dependence. This matter is discussed at length in P. Janet, Histoire de la Science Politique (Paris: 1887), II, p. 279.

¹⁵ Politique, III, 2, i. "God established kings as his ministers, and reigns through them over the people. We have already seen that the power comes from God. The prince, adds St. Paul, "is God's minister to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, fear: for he beareth not the sword in vain. For he is God's minister: an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." (Rom. XIII:11, 2). "Princes act thus as ministers of God and his lieutenants on earth. It is through them that he exercises his government. And now you say that you are able to withstand the kingdom of the Lord, which he possesseth by the sons of David?" (II Chron. XIII:8).

through His chosen house of David. Thus the royal throne is not the throne of a man, but the very throne of God himself.¹⁵

More than all this together, the person of the king is sacred, since God had anointed him like His prophets of old with a sacred unction, as were the popes and even the holy altars.¹⁷ But as he continues, "even without the external application of this unction, they are sacred through their office, as being the representatives of the divine majesty, deputed by providence for the execution of His designs."¹⁸ The title Christ may even be given to kings, "since under this venerable name the prophets revered them, and regarded them as associated with the sovereign power of God, by whom they exercised the authority over the people. There is thus something "religious" in the respect that one should render to the prince. The service of God and the respect for the king are synonymous, since God has placed in the princes something divine,

¹⁶ Politique, III, 2, i. "It is thus that we have seen that the royal throne is not the throne of a man, but the throne of God Himself. 'And among my sons, he hath chosen Solomon my son, to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel.' And again, 'Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king.' (I Chron. XXVIII: 5, 23). And finally, if one does not believe that it be particular to the Israelites to have the kings established by God, here is what He says: 'Over every nation He set a ruler. And Israel was made the manifest portion of God.' (Ecclesiasticus XVII:14, 15). He governs therefore all people, and gives them their kings, although He governs Israel in a more particular way and more pronounced."

¹⁷ Bossuet is referring to the Sainte Ampoule, the vial of holy chrism brought by a dove from heaven to the anointing and coronation of Clovis. This vial, miraculously replenished, existed down to the Revolution. The reference to the co-equality with the popes is an interesting re-statement of gallican ideas. See: Politique, III, 2, ii.

¹⁸ Ibid., loc. cit.

and reaffirming the often repeated phrase, Bossuet calls the Psalmist to his aid, and repeats after him: "I have said You are Gods, and all of you the sons of the Most High."¹⁹

The doctrine of divine right thus made the king not only the representative of God, but a divinity as well. Omer Talon, the Avocat-General, was merely re-stating the thesis of Bossuet when he said: "Their (the kings) person enjoys a sort of divinity, their foresight shares the privileges of the prophets and the certainty of oracles."²⁰ What in effect had taken place was the revival quite directly and simply, of the whole idea of the divine caesarship. Louis XIV became less the successor

¹⁹ Politique, III, 2, iii. Cf., Psalm LXXXI:6 (Douay). "It is why Saint Peter said: 'Be ye subject therefor to every human creature for God's sake: whether it be to the king as excelling, or to the governors as sent by Him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of the good.' Even when they do not fulfill their duty it is necessary to respect in them their charge and their ministry. 'Servants be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle but also the froward.'" (I Peter II:13, 14, 18). "From this it derives that the servants of God swear by the health and life of the king, as a thing divine and sacred..... We must now listen to the first Christians, and Tertullian who speaks thus in the name of them all: 'We swear, not by the geni of the Caesars; but by their life and their health, which is more august than all the geni. Do you not know that the geni are deamons? But we, who see in the emperors the choice and judgement of God, to whom He has given the commandment over all people, we respect in them what God has placed there, and we hold that for an oath.' He adds: 'What more can I say of our religion and our piety towards the emperor, that we must respect (him) as the one whom our God has chosen: in short I can say that Caesar is more to us than to you, because it is our God who has established him.' (See: Tertullian, Apol., n. 32 and 33). It is therefore the spirit of Christianity to make respect toward the kings with a sort of religion, what even Tertullian calls 'the religion of the second majesty' (cf., Tertullian, ibid., n. 35). This second majesty is only an emanation from the first; that is to say from the divine, which for the good of human kind, has wished to have reflected some part of its magnificence on the kings."

²⁰ Quoted in G. Hanotaux, Histoire de la Nation Française (Paris: 1924), IV, p. 291.

of Hugh Capet, than of Augustus, and the sacred title was even publically pronounced in 1652 by Bossuet himself, as he proclaimed: Nam res est publica Caesar, and with the whole cult of the Roman caesarism as a model, the artists and sculptures could without hesitation represent Louis as a Roman Emperor, as crowned with the laurel of divinity.²¹ Speaking of the blessings to true religion that were to be assured through the king's policy of conformity (i.e., the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes) Bossuet went beyond all the bounds of propriety, as he triumphantly cried: "Our fathers never saw, as we have, an invertebrate heresy fall at a stroke.... touched by so many marvels, let our hearts overflow to the piety of Louis. Let us raise our acclamations to the skies - to this new Constantine, this new Theodosius, this new Marcian, this new Charlemagne."²²

²¹ Bremond, H. (ed.), Bossuet: Textes Choisis (Paris: 1913), II, p. 123. The best example of the artistic representation is the famous equestrian statue of Louis at Montepellier (though the one at Versailles is in the same form). There are busts, and allegorical pictures without number that represent Louis as an emperor, accompanied by the usual signs of divinity, the Victory holding aloft the laurel crown.

²² Ibid., III, p. 112.

THE CULT OF LE ROI SOLEIL

III.

It was into the great complex of ideas on divine right monarchy, some already formulated as theories though as yet not law, that Louis XIV intruded himself, his personality and ideal of kingship. From the beginning he seized upon the prerogatives which elevated the kingship above all ordinary considerations, and translated his kingly qualities into action which personified the Absolute Monarch. His forthright demand for supreme control in the state upon the death of Cardinal Mazarin astonished everyone, but while some might smile benevolently at his youthful enthusiasm, he had a most valuable attribute - an unquenchable faith in himself, that overruled all interferences.²³ His first writing lesson had set forth the phrase, "Hommage is due to Kings. They do what they please."²⁴ In his Mémoires, Louis set down his own conception of monarchy, revealing the fact that the theories were henceforth to be one with his policies. Louis was very explicit in the assertion of the unlimited exercise of royal authority, as for example his statement referring to the disorders in the realm at his accession: "In-as-much as my chief hope in (these) reforms was based on my own will, their

²³ When one of the bishops presented himself to Louis to determine the course of action (at the death of Mazarin), he asked in effect, "To whom shall I address myself?" Louis replied, "To Me." Quoted in W.S. David, A History of France (New York: 1919), p. 152.

²⁴ See: Mémoires Historiques et Instructions pour le Dauphin, written by Louis XIV with the collaboration of Pellison, translated (in part) by H. Wilson, as A King's Lessons in Statecraft (New York: 1925), p. 153.

foundations at the outset rested on making absolute my will by conduct which should impose submission and respect...."²⁵

The power to do this came from God, and was limited by God alone, for as he said: "God alone is judge of the government of Kings."²⁶ And thus, unquestioning subjection to the monarch was to be the only guarantee of tranquility in the State.

Bishop Bossuet presents the same thesis in the Politique.

Though the power of the king be absolute, however, Bossuet is careful to show that it must be used to effect good, and that they (the kings) would be held responsible to God for the proper use of this power. The prince was a real pastor or shepherd, as noted in the text: "God chose his servant David, and took him from the flocks of sheep; he brought him from following ewes great with young, to feed Jacob his servant, and Israel his inheritance." Bossuet said that God had merely changed the flock: "instead of feeding sheep, he feeds men. To feed, in sacred language meant to govern, and thus the name of pasteur signifies the prince; so closely are these things united."²⁷ When the prince has judged therefore, he is the source of all justice; there is no other judgement, since judgements of the sovereign are one with the will of God."²⁸

²⁵ Mémoires historique, p. 48.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 72.

²⁷ Politique, III, 3, iii. Cf., Psalm LXXVII:70 (Douay).

²⁸ Ibid., IV, 1, ii. "When Josaphat established judges to judge the people, he had said, 'For your exercise not the judgement of man, but the Lord.' (II Chron. XIX:6) And the Psalmist has said: 'God hath stood in the congregation of Gods.' (Psalm LXXI:1).

In the eyes of Louis XIV the interests of France would best be served by identifying them with those of the sovereign. He walked in the steps of Richelieu, and to this extent it might be said that he made the glory of God come altogether second to the glory of the King of France. The Church was a most effective instrument of government, and therefore he supported it; but he expected the Pope and Bishops generally to take their marching orders from him. Royalty with Louis was a trade, the one to which he had been born; the métier de roi he said, "is a great one, noble and pleasing when one feels oneself to be worthy of acquitting oneself well in all things undertaken."²⁹ And this he was unquestionably capable of doing.

Louis became through his own efforts the "soul" of the state, the source of law, of justice, and all glory. He became the living symbol of an idea, the idea being the reality, Louis merely the outward and visible sign. Perhaps nothing indicates this quite so clearly as the episode which relates how in 1685 when the Doge of Genoa was received at court, Louis appeared dressed in a habit of cloth of gold laced with large diamonds (to effect the dazzling appearance of the sun).³⁰ During the speech that followed, the Doge and the King with all the princes uncovered each time the name of His Majesty was mentioned. Here, like the priests at Mass, who uncover at the

²⁹ Mémoires historique, p. 23.

³⁰ See: A. Boislisle (ed.), Mémoires de Saint Simon (Paris: 1879-1929), II, p. 369. The Marquis de Sourches in his Mémoires, ed. by A. Bertrand (Paris: 1882), IV, p. 134, gives essentially the same description.

In the eyes of Louis XIV the monarch of France would
be a mirror of his nation, and in the eyes of his
people he would be a mirror of his nation. He was a
second to the king of France. He was a
most effective instrument of government, and he was
suggested it; but he executed the king and he was generally
to take their marching orders from him. He was a
man of war, the one to which he had been born; the king
was not his end, "his end was the king, and his end was the
king himself to be a mirror of his nation, and in all
things undertaken." and this he was unquestionably capable
of doing.

Louis became through his own efforts the "mirror" of the
state, the mirror of law, of justice, and all glory. He became
the living symbol of an ideal, the ideal being the reality.
Louis merely the outward and visible sign, whereas nothing
indicates this more clearly as the episode which relates
now in 1685 when the king of France was received at court.
Louis appeared dressed in a habit of black and white with
large diamonds and the effect the occasion produced of the king.
The king's speech that followed, the king and the king with all
the honors unshared and time the name of his majesty was
mentioned. Now, the king's speech of 1685, the king at the

10. Journal de Louis XIV, p. 28.
11. Journal de Louis XIV, p. 28.
12. Journal de Louis XIV, p. 28.
13. Journal de Louis XIV, p. 28.
14. Journal de Louis XIV, p. 28.
15. Journal de Louis XIV, p. 28.

sacred name of Jesus, Louis was paying the highest homage to his office. He sat on the throne of God; the man of flesh and blood became merely the accidents of the Divine Real Presence.

God was the source of all the power that Louis wielded, and as the Emperors before him had maintained, his sword too came directly from on high. Greatness, order, and beauty were the things that most interested him; Heaven was the ideal and he represented that ideal, represented the right of force, and the force of right - a majesty which Bossuet maintained, "like the sun, shed the splendor and beneficence of its beams on rich and poor, on small and great," or again, "As the earth draws its life from the radiance of the sun, so the life of France emanated from his person."³¹

If Louis XIV was to be deified in his lifetime after the manner of the imperial Caesars, it might be easily accomplished verbally or in writing; the real problem would always remain that of representing graphically such an awesome mystery. Thus as has been already anticipated, the most logical expedient was adopted - the revival and reapplication of the sun emblem, a sign not only suitable for the august personage of the king, but of itself carrying many implications of ancient and hallowed significance. At a great tournament held in 1662, in the court of the Tuileries, since called the Place de Carrousel in memory of the grand occasion, there was fashioned for the king's

³¹ Paraphrase from the Politique. Writers in England had compared Henry VIII not only with the "Son of Man" but maintained that one could not view directly "the flaming beams of the King's bright sun." See: F. Baumer, op. cit., p. 85.

use an emblem of a sun darting its rays upon a globe with the motto "Nec Pluribus Impar."³² The words indicated of course that the king was second to none; the emblem presented an idea more difficult to translate. The two together, however, were merely the means of expressing publicly what the political theorists, publicists and religious leaders of France - the adherents of the idea of divine right had been attempting for a long time. But in this case, the task of describing or defining the majesty of a king, or of the mystery of sovereignty given to men by God through the king, was like trying to portray in words the brilliance of a diamond or the magnificence of a sunset.

It is to Bossuet, however, as in everything else, that one must turn for the great apotheosis, the successful attempt to set down in words this great idea, to explain the nature and meaning of "majesty."³³ One can hardly equal the grandure of his expression. "God is infinite, God is everywhere; the prince is not regarded as a particular man, he is a public person, all the state is in him; the will of the whole people is contained in his will." As God has united in Himself all perfection and virtue, "so the power of the individuals is united in the person of the prince. How magnificent that a single man can contain so much." As the power of God makes

³² The account of this carrousel, and of the use of the emblem, is contained in a manuscript of the Versailles library entitled: Courses de Testes et de Bagues faites par le Roy et par les Pariences et Seigneurs de sa Cour en l'année 1662. Fortunately, the illustrations and part of the text of this work are reproduced in the Noël edition of L'Illustration (1936).

³³ See: Politique, V, 4, i.

itself felt in an instant at the extremities of the world, "so the royal power acts in the same time in all the kingdom; it holds the whole realm in a commonwealth as God holds the whole world." The king in his cabinet, "makes but a movement of the lips, and captains, citizens, and soldiers act in concert." "It is the image of God which, seated on His throne in the highest, makes all nature move."³⁴ God is all holiness, all goodness, all power, all reason; in these things is the majesty of God. "In the image of these things is the majesty of the prince. See a people united into one single person; see this sacred power, paternal and absolute; see the secret reason which governs all parts of the earth enclosed in a single head; look at the image of God in the kings, and you have the idea of royal majesty."

For such magnificence the emblem of the sun would alone suffice; the life-giving, life-sustaining sun, which to primitive peoples had been a God, but for the Christian represented God's greatest gift of life and light to men. To the ancient Persian religions the sun represented the god of light who was in eternal struggle with the god of darkness. The coming of such mystery religions of the orient to Rome and the west, brought also the ideas of the imperial cult - of the Persian

³⁴ "If the power of God extends everywhere, the magnificence accompanies it. There is no place in the universe where does not appear the shining marks of his goodness, and likewise for the prince. As the Psalmist has said: 'Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or thither shall I flee from thy face? If I ascend into heaven, thou art there; if I descend into hell, thou art present. If I take my wings early in the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there also shall thy hand lead me; and thy right hand shall hold me.'" (Psalm CXXXVIII:7-12 - Douay).

King who was the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, representing on earth the majesty of the God of light. It was Diocletian who first formally instituted such an oriental caesarship in Rome, with all its trappings, prostrations, and the seclusion of the royal person, but it remained for Aurelian to combine the worship of the Sol Invictus with the Roman imperial cult, proclaiming it the official religion and the deified Caesar as its earthly representative.³⁵ Eventually, of course, Rome witnessed the triumph of the followers of the "Son of Man," but Rome did not cease to be an "imperial" city. The chief Bishop of the New Ecclesia came instead to sit upon the throne of the Caesars as the Vicarius Dei or Vicarius Christi - the earthly representative of the light of light, the life that was the light of man, the Sol Justitiae. Inherent in the position of the Papacy, however, were the germs of a protracted struggle between the two swords given by God to his earthly representatives - the struggle between the prerogatives of emperorship and of temporal princes generally, as opposed to the claims of the See of Peter. The triumph in the end of the temporal power made an accomplished fact of the imperial claims to be with the Pope the living representatives of God on earth, the holder of a sword that also came directly from God. With it could likewise come a revival of the idea that in the case of the French King, he was descended through Charlemagne from the Caesars. The enunciation of the theories of divine right, and

³⁵ The following might profitably be consulted: F. Cumont, Oriental Religions in Ancient Roman Paganism (Chicago: 1911); C. Bailey, Phases in the Religion of Ancient Rome (Berkeley: 1932); S. Angus, Mystery Religions and Christianity (London: 1925).

the creation of appropriate symbols of majesty, were merely a restoration of the rightful prerogatives to this child of the ages, Louis XIV Caesar Imperator. The struggle between Louis XIV and Innocent XI, can only be truly appreciated when it is set within this context of historical development.

LA REGALE

IV.

The reputation of Bossuet might very well rest upon no other witness than the power of his pen, but if this had been granted to him, if he could have withdrawn from the struggles of his day, it would have been to deny his entire nature, for the fact is that he belonged to his country and to his time and being so wholeheartedly French, he was a true Gallican, true to the principles known as "Gallicanism." As we have noted above, this whole movement and the principles upon which it was predicated, has become extremely vague in the minds of most men, unfortunately so with those English churchmen for whom it should be vitally interesting. The movement was forever silenced, in the face of opposition and schism to be sure, in 1870, yet this fact of dissipation cannot and should not blind our eyes to its importance as a factor paramount in the development of the French Church and the French Nation.

The claim of the French Church for independence in matters of government was indeed an ancient one, appearing first (as we may believe) in the reign of St. Louis, and in matters of faith and morals the French spirit tended increasingly to extend the scope of these claims.³⁶ Any assertion of the supremacy in

³⁶ We refer to the Ordonance of Louis XI of 1268 (the so-called "Pragmatic Sanction") the authenticity of which has been seriously contested. C. Petit-Dutaillis in his article "Saint Louis," in Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. VI, p. 350, maintains that it was a forgery produced by the councillors of Charles VII in 1438. But with reference to the principles, he says: "In his youth St. Louis would not have been disinclined to favour such an edict. In 1247 the demands for money made by the Popes who claimed the right of taxing the clergy in France

matters spiritual of the See of Peter was faced with determined opposition in France, and if we are to seek at least superficial reasons for this it may be suggested that what was inherent by nature came to have formal precedent in that period when the Papacy was at Avignon and the Gallican spirit forced itself for a time at least, upon the Church catholic. When, after this period of confusion, the churchmen met at Constance, it was the Gallican spirit which predominated, and the famous Declaration of the Council behind which had been the active influence of French canonists, which subordinated the Pope to the decisions of the entire Church, became the chief "document" of Gallicanism.³⁷

It was during this whole period that the University of to maintain the struggle with the Emperor Frederick, provoked a manifestation with which St. Louis associated himself. Ambassadors from the king and clergy were sent to Rome to make solemn complaint that benefices were being bestowed on foreigners, and that the French Church was being robbed by the Roman Curia." The Rev. W. H. Jervis, op. cit., I, p. 23, defends the document as authentic, basing his opinion upon evidence derived from Edmond Richer's Historia Concillia Generale, Vol. II, p. 189. The true Pragmatic Sanction, that of Bourges, 1438, was also important from the Gallican standpoint, since it enunciated the theory, not only of the superiority of a General Council over the Papacy, but of a National Council over every other ecclesiastical authority. For an excellent treatment, see: N. Valois, Histoire de la Pragmatique Sanction de Bourges (Paris: Picard, 1906).

³⁷ In this whole movement Chancellor Gerson had been particularly active. The famous Declaration reads, in part: "This holy synod of Constance, being a general council, and legally assembled in the Holy Spirit..... declares, and decrees as follows: And first it declares that this synod, legally assembled, is a general council, and represents the catholic church militant and has its authority directly from Christ; and everybody, of whatever rank or dignity, including also the pope, is bound to obey this council in those things which pertain to the faith....." For the complete text see: O.J. Thatcher & E. H. McNeal, A Source Book for Medieval History (New York: 1905), p. 329. Cf., Jervis, op. cit., I, pp. 89-91.

Paris became the principle arsenal of the Gallican spirit, although there was constant agreement from other official bodies, notably the Parlement which stood consistently in opposition to the University otherwise.³⁸ It has been well pointed out, and was indeed clearly realized then, that if the great center of French learning had failed to support the Parlement in its sometimes vehement denunciation of ecclesiastical encroachments, the Ultramontane faction might very well have triumphed.³⁹ The group who realized this particularly was the Jesuits, and it was they who in the years of national disunion before Henry IV, made a concerted effort to bring the University into line. The scholars resisted this attempt, however, and the opposition movement brought into prominence in due course the noted doctor of the Sorbonne, Edmond Richer.⁴⁰

Although Richer had begun his public career in the Ultramontane camp, it was the general uncertainty which preceeded the accession of Henry IV, and this king's generosity toward the University afterwards, which negated the active propagandizing of the Jesuits and eventually secured the allegiance of Richer and the scholars generally. Because of a general fear

³⁸ On the whole relationship of the University of Paris, cf., C. M. Jourdain, Histoire de l'Universite de Paris au XVIIe et au XVIIIe siècle (Paris: 1888).

³⁹ See: E.K. Sanders, op. cit., p. 178f.

⁴⁰ For an excellent study of the life of Richer, and the importance of his work, see: E. Puyol, op. cit. The movement that brought Richer into prominence, can be considered as the first phase of the later development under Louis XIV.

that Jesuit methods might triumph in spite of himself, Richer became the most active proponent of the demand for some definition of Gallican doctrines, this, we may suppose, because his position at the Sorbonne brought him into close contact with the ideas of Chancellor Gerson as they were perpetuated there.⁴¹ Thus in 1628 an attempt was launched (anticipating the movement under Louis XIV by some half century), to require a "profession of faith" by the nation in an officialized form of the Gallican principles.⁴² Although this failed of support, primarily because Cardinal Richelieu saw in it too open an attack upon the Church which he represented, the fact that such an idea had been given a definite form gradually commended it to others, and it is generally agreed among historians that the importance of Richer's work, and influence upon the eventual enunciation of Gallican principles, must not be underestimated.

In the interim between 1628 and 1682, the French monarchy passed to Louis XIV, and to understand the events that were to have so profound an effect upon the life and career of Bossuet, it is necessary to recall what we have already been at some length to delineate, that point of self-adoration which had been reached by Louis when he came to blows with Innocent XI. In that period, one must take note of how

⁴¹ Jourdain, op. cit., p. 4ff. Richer had been a follower of Bellarmine, who above all others can be taken as the leader of Ultramontane opinion. On the life of Gerson, see: J.L. Connolly, John Gerson, reformer and mystic (Louvain: 1928).

⁴² E. Fuyol, op. cit., p. 155. Cf., Jervis, op. cit., p. 268ff.

Cardinal Mazarin maintained a constant antipathy towards the papacy which was not lessened when Louis XIV mounted the throne himself in 1661, for he almost immediately forced Alexander VII to "humiliating concessions" as the result of diplomatic difficulties. It was at this particular time, also, that we catch a glimpse of the growing irregularity in the position of the Jesuit Order, in-as-much as one of their leaders, Father Rapin, became very vocal about the royal "condescension" in honouring the pope (following restoration of relations) in that an ambassador had been sent to the Holy See.⁴³

It was not without royal support that the Faculty of Theology of the Sorbonne was encouraged, some two years later, to formulate the tenets of Richer into Six Articles which were to be, quite obviously, derogatory to the position of the papacy, and antagonistic to the idea of infallibility.⁴⁴

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Viscount St. Cyr, "Gallican Church," Cambridge Modern History, p. 76; for further details see: E. K. Sanders, op. cit., p. 179 with notes.

⁴⁴ For the text see: Jourdain, op. cit., pp. 220-223. Translation by the present writer:

1. It is in no way the doctrine of the Faculty that the sovereign pontiff has any authority over the temporalities of kings.
2. It is the doctrine of the Faculty that the Most Christian King owes his temporalities to God alone; that this is its ancient teaching from which it will never depart.
3. That the subjects of the king owe him an allegiance and an obedience from which they cannot be dispensed under any circumstances.
4. That the same Faculty does not approve and has never approved of any propositions contrary to the authority of the king, the liberties of the Gallican Church and the canons received in the kingdom, for example that the pope can depose bishops against these same canons.
5. That it is not the doctrine of the Faculty that the

Nothing particular was made of these articles, however, since circumstances were not ready to produce any kind of breach with the papacy, although they were to serve as a model for the still more famous articles of Bossuet. Louis XIV, assured of support by the nation generally, and of the theologians in particular, continued his policy of independence. In 1665 the Sorbonne was asked to condemn certain books written in support of the Roman supremacy; this was complied with, apparently without objection, and when Alexander VII in turn condemned the censure the Parlement issued an edict which prohibited the reception of the Bull in France, thus upholding the judgement of the scholars.⁴⁵

These incidents could not but add fuel to the already dangerously incendiary character of the relations between king and pope. Indeed, Louis demonstrated his independence still further in 1667, when he took personal responsibility for the separation and re-marriage of the Queen of Portugal, without reference to the rights of the papacy in a matter (clearly within papal domain) bordering upon ecclesiastical action.⁴⁶ This spirit of self-sufficiency in matters of religion might seem strange, if it were not for the fact that the traditionally accepted superiority of the French kings.

pope is above the Council

6. That it is also not the doctrine of the Faculty that the pope is infallible without any consent of the Church.

⁴⁵ Jourdain, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

⁴⁶ See: C. Gerin, Louis XIV et le Saint-Siège (Paris: 1887), Vol. II, chapter iii.

holding... the... still more... of... practical... Governor was asked to confirm certain... in support

without objection, and then... his... the reception of a Bill... judgement of the... These... could not... the... main... the... still... in 1967, when... responsibility... the... and... of... the... to the... of the... in a... (... parallel... upon... action... the... of self-sufficiency in matters of... relation... some... it was not for the fact that the... received an... of the French...

... is... also not... the... of... the... is... common... 19... 1967... 1967

included also a certain "headship" of the French Church, and a semi-religious nature was even attributed at times to the person of the king by the papacy itself. They had always been given precedence over all other monarchs, if only in the title "Eldest Son of the Church" and the epithet "Most Christian King" carried with it something not shared equally with the monarchs of other countries. The visible sign of this of course, was the fact that no other sovereign could boast that he was anointed with an oil so holy as that divine gift preserved at Rheims.⁴⁷ More than this, since the king was considered the living representative of God on earth (in the temporal sphere) who had "written on his forehead a character divine," the king's person itself became sacred, and might become the object of special veneration.⁴⁸ Thus it should not be surprising to find the performance of miracles ascribed to him, and that an overly zealous multitude might often crowd about his person in order to touch him or his garments.⁴⁹ The most fascinating aspect of this, however, is the age-old prerogative of the king to heal through the power of the "King's Touch," effected in special ceremonies at Easter, Whitsunday, All Saints', and Christmas, when long files of persons affected with scrofula and other diseases, were assembled and presented to the king. With the priests, the king would then pass by, and placing his hand on the head of each of the

⁴⁷ The chrism of the Sainte Ampoule. See, supra, note 17.

⁴⁸ Bossuet, Politique, V, 4, 1.

⁴⁹ See: Taine, Ancien Régime (New York: 1876), Vol. I, p. 17f.

included also a certain "reading" of the sacred number, and
a semi-religious nature was even attributed at times to the
person of the king by the people itself. They had also a
been given precedence over all other members, if only in the
title "Alphabet of the Church" and the epithet "Great Christian"
which carried with it something not shared equally with the
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consecrated at Bethan.⁴⁷ More than this, since the king was
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the sacred prerogative of the king to heal through the power
of the "king's touch," effected in special ceremonies at Bethan,
Jerusalem, All Saints', and Christmas, when long files of
the poor, the blind, the lame, the afflicted, the king would
not hesitate to be healed. With the passage of time, the king would
then wear a crown, and placing his hand on the head of each of the

⁴⁷ The origin of the name

⁴⁸ See: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, V, p. 1.

⁴⁹ See: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. I, p. 170.

unfortunate individuals; repeating the phrase, "The King touches you; God cures you."⁵⁰ Finally, nothing indicates so well the semi-priestly state, than the fact that the French kings, alone among other sovereigns, continued to partake of the chalice at Mass.

Such factors as these can very well account for the intense spirit of orthodoxy manifested in all aspects of the relations between Louis XIV and his subjects, and of his desire that all heterodox opinions be suppressed throughout the realm. In a sense he acted with sincerity, as a true son of the Church, and to this extent the revocation of the Edict of Nantes was a logical result; but although Louis might even recognize the Papacy as an integral part of the scheme for the governing of the world, there was no level above that on which he was himself enthroned, and heresy at home was to be execrated all the more because it flouted the royal wish in matters of religion. The factors were the same then, that produced the support of the

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See: Saint-Simon, Mémoires, IV, p. 83, for an extensive description of one of these ceremonies. Cf., Funk-Bretano, op. cit., pp. 178-181, where there are recounted some interesting incidents where the English kings exercised the same prerogatives, but apparently only in their capacity as "Kings of France." Queen Anne was the last to take advantage of this privilege. One should note further, that if the divine grace might be obtained through the person, it might likewise be solicited through his figured representation - in the sense that the statue shares in the divinity of the prototype. On one occasion in the reign of Louis XV, during the illness of the Dauphin, it was reported that great crowds of people assembled before the statue of Henry IV, and kneeling there, prayed to the monarch (as intercessor) to effect a cure. See: Épître à Henry IV (Voltaire), cited in C. Stryiński, Le Règne des Trois Derniers Bourbons, p. 355. Note the following lines:

"Lorsque la mort sur lui levait sa faux tranchante,
On vit de citoyens un foule tremblante
Entourer ta statue et la baigner de pleurs:
C'était la leur autel....."

Papacy as a legitimate instrument of divine government, and opposition to it as an independent, sovereign authority. It was this antagonism to Ultramontane principles that made Louis all the more anxious to secure to himself ecclesiastical authority, so that there eventually came a time when the assertion of rights no longer sufficed and he passed beyond their limits.

"No king of France was ever more sincerely devoted to the faith of his fathers, but no king of France has ever been the cause of so much consternation to the Pope as Louis XIV."⁵¹ This was an appraisal which rang true in the sequel, for it was the contradictory intentions of the king which accounted for the dilemma confronting all loyal subjects who also tried to be faithful to the Church. Personalities further complicated issues. There seems to be a great deal of truth in the statement that, "If a diplomatist had occupied the See of Peter, there might have been no crisis." But Innocent XI, who became pope in 1676 was a man in whom the contrast of violent prejudice and personal saintliness worked to the detriment of his own cause.⁵² Indeed, Innocent was governed by the highest motives, he desired even to reform the Church and to encourage a life

⁵¹ J. de Maistre, *Oeuvres*, Vol. IV, p. 157 quoted in E. K. Sanders, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

⁵² Particular phases of the life and work of Innocent XI are admirably treated in: E. Michaud, *Louis XIV et Innocent XI, d'après les correspondances diplomatiques inédites* (Paris: 1883), 4 volumes. His simple and blameless life, his conscientious discharge of duty, and his devotion to the needs of the poor won for him such a name, that in spite of the opposition of France, he was elected to the papacy. His character and life were such as to suggest the propriety of canonization, but hostile influences have defeated every move in that direction.

of real devotion, especially among the religious orders. Against such a policy, the principles of Louis XIV, at least in its practical aspect, stood in opposition. Royal patronage in France had become such an established usage that the king would naturally be opposed to any reform, especially of a type that reflected the real meaning of the religious life.⁵³ But more than this, of course, the two principles with which Innocent had to deal, were mutually exclusive; for if the Ultramontane theory be produced far enough the loyalty of a subject became in theory at least dependent upon the pleasure of the pope, while the principles of Richer or Colbert, led directly and logically to the denial of Roman supremacy. In such a situation no amount of purity and greatness of intention could maintain peace, especially when "righteous indignation was opposed by patriotic fervor." The conduct of Louis XIV, in the latter stages of the persecution of Port Royal particularly, is to be attributed to the pressure of the struggle with the court of Rome, which began at this time to engage his energies, and which in its results gave rise to some of the most critical occurrences in the history of the Church of France.

The question which was directly responsible for setting

⁵³ We have a notice in Louis's Memoires for the Dauphin concerning the uselessness of monks, and he even put forth a scheme for discouraging them; but he realized too well how much a part of society they had become to attempt extirpation. See: Dryess, Mémoires de Louis XIV (Paris: 1860), II, pp. 223, 297. Thus Innocent's ambition to reform the Orders only showed that the more closely they followed their rule, the more likely they were to become a force in opposition to secular power. On this matter, and Colbert's policy which regarded the Orders, as an outright menace to the state, see: C. Gerin, L'Assemblée du Clerge de France de 1682 (Paris: 1870), p. 285. There is a good general discussion in E.K. Sanders, op. cit., p. 182-3.

the smouldering enmity ablaze concerned an ancient privilege of the Kings of France, known as La Régale. Implied herein was the principle not merely that the king was the legitimate guardian of the temporalities of vacant sees, but also that he had a right to the patronage belonging to them - the revenue as well as the right to appoint to Cathedral dignities and benefices of all kinds. It will be evident at once, that a difficulty was raised here identical in its basic principles with the problems of the War of Investitures. That such privileges were inherent to the Crown of France, at least from an early date, is an indisputable fact; but questions have been entertained as to the way in which they were acquired. On the one hand it was suggested that a grant must have been made at some time or other on the part of the Gallican Church. This would seem all the more reasonable if the line be adopted that such a prerogative is clearly outside the province of the civil power; although it should be noted that such privilege did not extend to benefices in which was involved the direct cure of souls. Thus much was made from time to time, of supposed concessions by the Church to Clovis, and others of the Merovingian line, particularly of Pope Adrian I to Charlemagne.⁵⁴ A great deal of stress was also laid upon a certain canon of the Council of Lyons in 1274, which referred directly to this custom of régale, and sanctioned it specifically in the churches where it was already extant, but prohibiting its extension.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ For a good brief summary, see: Jervis, op. cit., II, pp. 23-25.

⁵⁵ See: C.J. Hefele, Histoire des conciles (Paris: 1907-21), Vol. IX, pp. 220-26.

On the other hand, by the nature of the case, it was argued that the right was an inherent one, inherent in the office of sovereign, who in his capacity as "supreme protector" of the Church was bound to administer vacant sees.

Whatever the origin, the fact remained that throughout France there were churches which had been from time immemorial exempt from the régale, so that when the Crown attempted to extend its right, it generally met with stubborn opposition. Henry IV, for example, had published a Declaration in 1606, stating that he did not purpose further extensions of the régale, but in 1608 the Parlement of Paris, apparently on the recommendation of the Crown, pronounced an opposite decision in a particular case and stated that the régale was in force in the church in question "as throughout His Majesty's dominions."⁵⁶ Complaint was naturally forthcoming, and an official investigation was instituted, the prelates involved being forced eventually to submit documentary proof of their position which was of course an impossibility. Eventually the Clerical Assembly meeting in 1655, submitted a detailed report to the Crown, Cardinal Mazarin being then Chief Minister, and a rapprochement was effected wherein the state promised satisfaction.⁵⁷ Thus matters stood, without having affected the fundamental principle involved.

⁵⁶ Jervis, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 25.

⁵⁷ Ibid., loc. cit. The Archbishop de Marcs, had submitted the views of the clergy in a detailed report; Mazarin admitted that the position was just, and in accord with the satisfaction promised, it seems that an edict was issued, which was not executed.

in the other hand, by the nature of the case, it was a matter
such the right was an inherent one, and it is the right
of sovereignty, who in this capacity as "supreme power"
which was bound to maintain order and peace.

Nevertheless the truth, the fact remains that the
law was not a mere Chinese law, but a law from time immemorial
extended from the beginning, so that when the crown attempted to
extend its power, it necessarily met with a strong opposition.
Hence, IV, for example, had published a resolution in 1895,
stating that he did not intend to make extensions of the
realm, but in 1898 the movement of reform, especially on the
recommendation of the British, announced an opposite decision
in a particular case and stated that the principle was in force
in the council in question "as the law of the land".

action was instituted, the reformer himself being forced
eventually to admit occasionally that the principle was
was not a mere an impossibility, but a reality, and a
meeting in 1898, admitted a definite reform in the
Gardiner, Garstin being then Chief Minister, and a representative
was elected wherein the state a united effort.

the view of the British, the British and the British
the view of the British, the British and the British
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Considering once more the position to which Louis XIV had risen in the state, the manner in which Colbert and Louvois vied with each other in exalting his will, and how indeed Louis was at the peak of his glory, so that he was regarded as the "most glorious" prince in all of Europe, called by the title of "le Grand" by his own people, and we have the setting in which the final act of this drama was to be played out. On the 10th of February, 1683, there appeared the famous Declaration which had as its purpose the extension of the "droit de regale" to all archbishoprics and bishoprics throughout the realm. In accordance with its provisions, all the bishops of those dioceses hitherto exempt were summoned to make an oath of allegiance, and receive back their temporalities from the Crown.⁵⁸

The extent to which both the compliance with the wishes of the Crown met with general acceptance, and the degree to which it was vehemently opposed, can be seen at once in the fact that out of some twenty-nine bishoprics affected, in only two instances was the obedience refused. Upon what motives most of the prelates acted, we cannot now determine. We can either commend them for good-will returned for protection received from the Crown, or condemn them for weakness or a spirit of connivance with the Crown in an encroachment which had certainly never been tolerated by their predecessors. Perhaps some little insight into the situation can be gained

⁵⁸ For a good brief survey of the immediate background of this Edict, and the documents relative to its publication, see: J.T. Loyson, L'Assemblée du Clerge de France de 1682 (Paris: 1870), chapter I. Cf., E. Michaud, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 340-366, with excellent notes.

from the remark of Voltaire to the effect that the rebels were "unfortunately the two men in the kingdom who bore the highest character."⁵⁹ The two, Nicholas Pavillon, Bishop of Alet, and Francois de Caulet, Bishop of Pamiers, were prelates revered throughout France for their fervent piety, and general pastoral devotedness. No arguments, however, no entreaties, no menaces, could reduce them to compliance.⁶⁰

The long protracted details of this struggle need not detain us particularly, although the principles involved are of utmost importance. Since the two bishops, even after repeated admonitions, refused to register their oath, the Crown proceeded to make nominations to their dioceses, which was met by decrees of suspension, only to be followed in turn by annulments handed down by the Archbishop of Narbonne. A similar tract was followed by both bishops of mutual recriminations, suspensions and opposition by a metropolitan in subservience to the Crown. Appeal was finally made to the Holy See, and Innocent who maintained a strong prejudice against Louis XIV, espoused the cause of the two appellant bishops with all the vigour he could maintain.

The Bishop of Alet died in 1678, but Caulet was left as

⁵⁹ Voltaire (F.M. de Arouet), Siècle de Louis XIV (Paris: 1854), Vol. II, p. 126. The exempt cathedrals were for the most part in the south, in Provence (where the regale had never been in force at all), Dauphine, Languedoc and Guienne. There were a few also (Nevers, Auxerre, Besancon, Bourges and Arras) in the north.

⁶⁰ There is an extensive treatment of the problem of clerical resistance (these two in particular) in both C. Gerin, L'Assemblée du Clergé, chapter III, and Loyson, op. cit., chapters II-IV. The best brief survey is Jervis, op. cit., pp. 26-30. Cf., Michaud, op. cit., Vol. III, chapters XIV-XVI.

the champion of a principle which he held to be vital to the existence of the Church of France. In the struggle certain points deserve careful attention. It was not the details of the administration of the diocese of Pamiers, which involved restrictions placed upon the Jesuit order by a bishop who entertained Jansenist sympathies,⁶¹ nor even the larger question of the régale, however important this might have been in the beginning. A Bishop of the Gallican Church had openly rebelled against the King, had withstood admonition by the Metropolitan, and showed such strength of character as to suffer the loss of property and personal safety.⁶² Worse still, the Pope had approved of his conduct, which was regarded as an outright invasion of Gallican Liberties.⁶³

We have already become familiar with what factors of

⁶¹ The two bishops of Pamiers and Alet were good friends, the dioceses being contiguous, and De Caulet had been converted to Jansenist sentiments by the other. They were thus equally detested by the Jesuits, but the society had experienced diocesan discipline in Pamiers, when in 1668 the order had been refused the right to hear confessions. Against this they had rebelled, and published libellous attacks on the bishop, who attacked them openly and finally issued a sentence of excommunication. See: Loyson, op. cit., pp. 47-49.

⁶² After the repeated admonitions, the Bishop of Pamiers was threatened with the seizure of his temporalities; when this was finally carried into effect, he did not suffer extensively since his losses were covered by gifts from friends, and the clergy undertook to tax themselves for his support.

⁶³ On this see: Jervis, op. cit., p. 28. "The Pope's conduct in this affair was dictated, beyond doubt, by high principles and deep conviction; at the same time it must be confessed that the whole dispute was somewhat out of date. When we recollect that by the Concordat of 1516 the Curia had deliberately surrendered to the Crown the right of nomination to all bishoprics in France, it was too late in the day to demur to the assertion of a privilege which was at once far more ancient and far less important. Such an anachronism was self-condemned to failure."

opposition the Papacy was forced to deal in any attempt to maintain order within the French Church, but of these two in particular came to bear upon this most serious of problems. In the first place, the King's counsellors were, as it has been pointed out, "more disposed to foster his resentment than to allay it." The reason for this is not hard to discover, when one realizes that on the one hand the Chancellor Le Tellier, who was among the leaders of political Gallicanism was in direct alliance with his son Louvois, the Commander-in-Chief of the King's armies, while on the other, Harlai de Champvallon, Archbishop of Paris, had become so ensconced in the good graces of Louis and so in disfavour with Innocent XI, that any extension of the royal power in ecclesiastical affairs, the greater would be the advantage to himself.⁶⁴ In the second place, and most interesting of all, was the fact that the King's Confessor, Pere La Chaise, a Jesuit, had absolute authority to assign all benefices at the disposal of the King.⁶⁵ Thus in his associations with Harlai of Paris, both had an equal desire to exalt the position of the King, and their reaction at the defiance of Caulet of Pamiers was to no small degree determined by that Bishop's open accusation that the extension of the regale was but an excuse to increase Jesuit patronage.

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See: E.K. Sanders, op. cit., p. 185-6, with references drawn from the Memoires of L. Legendre, and D. de Cosnac. The position of Harlai of Paris had been furthered by court intrigue and the help of Mme. de Montespan; his interests had been further thwarted in this whole matter, since it was his business to work out and put into operation the plans of Colbert.

⁶⁵ "The Jesuit lacked the intellectual ability possessed by the Archbishop, but as a courtier he was no less talented." See: E. Lavissee, Histoire de France (Paris: 1900-11), Vol. VII, pt. ii.

What then could be expected of any opposition to encroachments by the civil power? The clergy as a body was really not a free agent, for in no area of his policy as a ruler had Louis been more clever than in his dealings with them.⁶⁶ By a gradual process of aggression, he brought under his control every center where the Church might raise up an organized opposition; he suppressed local and provincial councils, and in problems of infractions where ecclesiastics were placed under censure, there was no appeal against the royal mandate. Appeal to Rome was forbidden legally, but more than this, direct communication with the Pope was entirely circumscribed. Quite obviously the Pope was in Rome, while in France Louis attempted through the various means we have already examined, to impose upon every mind a vision of himself as a presiding power, against whose decisions there was no appeal. The clergy were thus caught upon the horns of a dilemma which redounded to the benefit of the crown. How vital this was, becomes clear when one realizes that basic to the whole Gallican position was the assertion of the independent authority of a bishop, which was essentially a theological question and because it was challenged by the Pope there was no alternative than to support the King. Yet this theological question became involved in political intrigue, to the extent of being quite detrimental to the interests of the French Church.

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There is a good survey of this problem in Sanders, op. cit., p. 187, and in Jervis, op. cit., II, pp. 10-12.

BOSSUET AND THE ASSEMBLY OF 1682

V.

When Bossuet preached the Easter sermon before the King in 1681, he made a special point of paying tribute to the excellence of ecclesiastical organization in France, by ascribing its perfection to "the prince who esteemed it his greatest honour to be known as the most zealous and the most submissive of the Church's children."⁶⁷ This seems rather inappropriate to the situation in which he was about to find himself; perhaps he did not realize the seriousness of the crisis that had already begun to take shape, or perhaps he undervalued the forces of opposition which were ranged about him.⁶⁸ Whatever the case, the events made of Bossuet a public figure of no mean proportions, but although he may have added notably to his fame, the opportunity of further advancement in the Church was to be forever closed. At the moment when the Diocese of Meux was conferred, it was generally accepted that the new bishop would be a Cardinal soon.⁶⁹ This might well have

⁶⁷ Oeuvres de Bossuet (Paris: 1845), Vol. X, p. 181.

⁶⁸ See: E.K. Sanders, op. cit., p. 188. This author attempts to make it out that Bossuet was quite unaware of the significance of events. I think that this is a bit unnecessary; the quarrel over regale was not in itself unique, nor was opposition to the papacy a new thing in France. Bossuet did become aware of the gravity of the situation when it developed upon new lines, but this does not prove that he was not aware of it before. The struggle itself was not new, but the chaos resulting from this particular clash of authority suddenly showed its complexity. "It is very clear," wrote a contemporary, "that if the Pope and King had foreseen all that would result from this business they would have taken care at the beginning not to let it go so far." Legendre, Mémoires, p. 44.

⁶⁹ Bossuet had been made Bishop of Condom, in September 1669, but had resigned this post to become tutor of the Dauphin. He was made Bishop of Meaux on the 2nd of May, 1681.

come to pass, since it seemed that at last his true worth was being realized, and the value of his prodigious learning recognized.⁷⁰ But for good or no, he was straightway to be called to defend a cause which had become thoroughly odious in the sight of the Pope, and by his convictions as much as his loyalty to the King, Bossuet made the choice between his conscience and future preferment.

How are we to judge this decision? It would be easy enough to agree with the cliché that he became the "dupe of what he adored," that his fascination for the King had thrown a spell over his judgement. But this is to miss the real character of the man. The admiration he rendered to the King throughout the eleven years of service at court, the flamboyant things he wrote, were quite sincere. The difficulty is with us, to see behind these outward things, to the deep and equally sincere conviction that the royal authority which Louis represented was an authority derived directly from God, and equal (within the temporal sphere) with the authority of the Holy See. Such authority stood for unity, and it was upon such unity in both spheres, temporal as well as spiritual, that the salvation of mankind depended. While it was indeed

⁷⁰ The Bishopric of Meaux was a particularly coveted post because of its proximity to the court; the king seems to have waited for this particular opportunity, for upon vacancies Lyon, Sens and Beauvais respectively invited the King to give them Bossuet as Bishop, and both the Bishops of Chalons and Meaux endeavored to have him made coadjutor. Bossuet himself had been patient, as he wrote: "You must not be surprised if I say nothing about the various reports concerning the Arch-episcopate of Lyons. Whatever may be said, I feel in my own heart that it is not intended.....but I think it more faithful to God not to dwell upon anything that concerns myself, except when necessary - 'sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'" Oeuvres de Bossuet, Vol. XXVIII, p. 122.

unfortunate that he had been called to serve in a period when the two aspects of this divine authority were in conflict, yet it was this very clash of authority, this test of character that demonstrates for us his real courage, his sense of caution, and his most excellent understanding of the ideals at stake. One may not love the diplomat, which Bossuet truly was, nor does one generally regard with much affection the court ecclesiastic, by the very nature of the task he is called to perform. But it should become abundantly evident that had Bossuet not been possessed of the faculty to command respect from both parties, to hold in balance both extremes, it is doubtful whether actual schism could have been avoided.

The question of régale had by this time become a convenient slogan for both sides in the controversy that was taking shape over the defiance of the Bishop of Pamiers. Unfortunately, however, neither side could have been appeased by a settlement (or so it seemed), since neither the dignity of Rome nor the Liberties of the Church of France could be made a matter of compromise. But the situation had come to the point where some conclusion was necessary, and in May of 1681 the King summoned an ecclesiastical Assembly to discuss the question. Although the events leading up to this Assembly have been detailed already, it should be noted that the main desire of the Crown was to obtain some judgement in the matter of several distasteful briefs of the Pope, which had been fulminated against all who had taken part in the "affair of Pamiers." There had been three of these, and it may be assumed that it

was the last that made the calling of some sort of Assembly mandatory, one which was generally pronounced to be wholly irreconcilable with the maxims of the Liberties of the Church of France.

In the first (dated March 12, 1678) the Pope pointed out that the recent attempt to extend his (the King's) prerogatives was an invasion of the most sacred rights of the Church; he attributed it to the sinister counsels of men who thought only of paying court to His Majesty for the sake of their own private ends; and, who, while seeking at all hazards to augment his earthly power, cared little for the misery which he might have to endure hereafter from remorse of conscience, in the prospect of appearing before the tribunal of God.⁷⁰ The second and the third were couched in this same tone of urgency and solemn remonstrance, warning Louis to desist from a course which could not but issue in disastrous consequences. As a conclusion to the last (December 27th, 1679) Innocent departed from the note of pleading, by announcing directly that no further entreaties would be employed, but that he would proceed to apply such remedies as had been placed in his hands by virtue of his spiritual authority. And he said: "No perils, no commotions, no privations, can shake our resolution; we know that we are called to suffer such privations; and we do not esteem life itself more dear than your salvation and our own."⁷¹

⁷⁰ E. Michaud, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 373. Cf., Loyson, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-90; also, Gerin, *Assemblée du Clergé*, p. 114ff.

⁷¹ Loyson, *op. cit.*, p. 94ff. Cf., Michaud, *op. cit.*, p. 328; also, Bausset, *Histoire de Bossuet* (Paris: 1846), Vol. II, p. 115.

Some forty-one prelates assembled in Paris upon this notable occasion, and to them was submitted the problem of issuing some statement on the matter of regale.⁷² The Archbishop of Rheims (Le Tellier, a son of the Chancellor) summed up their position when the final reports were issued, in these rather notable words: "Bolder men would have talked perhaps more boldly; better men might have spoken more worthily; we who are merely average have said what we thought best suited to the occasion, not as an example to others, but as an attempt to stave off much worse evils which are threatening the Church."⁷³

Such a statement may be taken as the key to the decisions rendered in the formal report, which was a lengthy and "plausibly argued document," but which set forth the generally accepted opinion which was confirmed by the Archbishop's comment, that for the sake of peace and in order to avoid

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A somewhat irregular method was adopted for convening this Assembly; it was composed of any bishop or archbishop who happened to be in Paris at the time of the summons. Bossuet (as titular of Condom) thus received a call. See: Gerin, L'Assemblée du Clergé, p. 137ff. The chief points submitted to this group were: whether the universality of the "droit de regale" was clearly and absolutely determined by the second Council of Lyons? Whether considering the different sentiments held by theologians, the Church ought to declare positively what is the true meaning of that Council? Supposing the Pope to be correct in his interpretation of the Council, to whom does it belong to judge concerning the Regale? Who have taken cognizance of it from the time of Innocent III to the present day? Supposing the Pope to be the proper judge, ought he to adjudicate in person at Rome, or by commissioners acting on the spot? Whether, inasmuch as the case is doubtful the prelates ought not to interfere for the purpose of checking further proceedings on the part of the Pope, especially if they should feel that such pretensions are more likely to engender scandals than to put an end to the dispute? For the text, see: Loyson, op. cit., p. 118-19.

73 Quoted from Avrigny, Mémoires Chronologique, Vol. III, p. 188, in E.K. Sanders, op. cit., p. 190.

the greater evils which there was much reason to believe would result, the Church should tolerate the application of régale according to the terms of the royal Declarations, and that this conclusion, together with the grounds on which it had been arrived at, should be respectfully notified to the Holy See.⁷⁴

The only result of consequence that issued from these deliberations was a petition to the King requesting the convocation of a National Council. Such the occasion clearly demanded, and in such an assembly the clergy of France might debate together the problems and render a decision which would bear the weight of collective authority. Implied of course was the point that by so doing the Crown could hardly fail

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The report answered all the above-mentioned points in favour of the Crown. It showed, first of all, that the "droit de régale" had been authorized by many Popes, and by the Gallican Council of Bourges; that the right of "collation to benefices" was a right conferred only by the Church, so that those churches subject to régale in 1274 (Council of Lyons) had no reason to complain, and those exempt might very well defend their rights until the Royal Declaration of 1673. With reference to this point, the report becomes quite specific: "Ever since the time of Philip the Fair this has been accounted a jus regium - so inalienably and imprescriptibly annexed to the Crown, that in that respect the king is not subject to the laws and discipline of the Church. Since there is no human power to control him, the extension of the prerogatives to churches where it had not hitherto been exercised is a matter which lies exclusively in his own hands. Moreover, it appears that the canon of the Council of Lyons, upon which so much reliance is placed, was never executed; that it was caused by complaints made against the royal officers, who were accustomed to plunder and destroy the property of the Church - an abuse which no longer exists, since the present practice is to preserve the entire revenue for the benefit of the newly-appointed Bishop. Nor is it by any means certain that the canon in question has any reference whatever to the modern institution known by the name of the régale." On this report and its circumstances, see: Gerin, L'Assemblée du Clergé, pp. 144-45, and summary, pp. 155-164; cf., Loyson, op. cit., pp. 118-126. The text quoted appears also in Jervis, op. cit., p. 33.

to secure a fair consideration of its claims.

In the celebrated Assembly of 1682, Bishop Bossuet (now of Meaux) was to be the principal actor. Although such clerical convocations were supposed to be representative (this one being of the type usually assembled every five years), the "elections" in the various provinces were actually left to the nomination of the King, so that the constituents of this notable Assembly were not such as would be especially inclined to allay the demands of the Papacy, or even avoid open conflict.⁷⁵ Bossuet seemed at first more interested in the meeting and earnest about it, than anxious; but from his correspondance we may note how this confidence gave way finally to outright distrust of the future.⁷⁶ Thus even before the opening of the Assembly, he wrote to a friend concerning it: "You know what the Assemblies of the clergy are, and the sort of temper which usually prevails in them. I perceive certain dispositions which lead me to augur well of the present one; but I dare not trust these hopes, and, to say the truth, they are mingled with much apprehension."⁷⁷ In it, naturally, he saw the possibility of grave

⁷⁵ For complete details of the calling of the Assembly, and of the elections, with extensive documentary materials, see: Gerin, L'Assemblée du Clergé, chapter V. Each province elected four deputies, two of whom held episcopal rank.

⁷⁶ Note the letter, dated 1 September: "There is some indication that I shall be of (a member) the Assembly.....for my part, we must enter into the spirit of the negotiations which have been begun....." See: Correspondance de Bossuet, ed. by C. Urbain and E. Levesque (Paris: Hachette, 1909), Vol. II, p. 251-3. This apparent confidence had disappeared by the end of the month.

⁷⁷ Correspondance, II, p. 256-7. This letter, dated 22 September, was written to his friend de Rance, Abbot of La Trappe, opening

danger, for the reason that it was being convoked in an atmosphere of political intrigue and that the cause of unity for which he stood would surely suffer by association with Political Gallicanism of the basest sort.

It seemed at this particular time, when the head of the State was at variance with the head of the Church, that (as Bossuet himself believed) there were certain relationships which it was wiser to leave undefined.⁷⁸ The particular danger he feared was that the party of court bishops, who would be compliant to the wishes of the king, and the prelates of extreme Gallican views, in their eagerness to cast aspersions against the recent papal proceedings, might be brought together in an action which could only result in open breach with the Holy See.⁷⁹

Perhaps the thing that was needed most at this critical moment was calm and balanced judgement, and this function Bossuet was to fulfill with consummate artistry. Fortunate

as follows: "I fear I shall be deprived for this year of the consolation which I hoped for (that of visiting De Rance at La Trappe); the Assembly of the clergy is about to be held; and it is desired, not only that I should be a member of it, but that I should preach the opening sermon. I may perhaps be able to steal ten days or a fortnight, if this sermon should be deferred, as it is rumoured, till the month of November. Be this as it may, if I cannot go to pray with you, pray at all events for me; the affair is one of importance, and well worthy to engage your thoughts....."

⁷⁸ See: E.K. Sanders, op. cit., p. 191, quoting the dictum of J. de Maistre in his Oeuvres, vol. II, p. 168.

⁷⁹ It should also be pointed out (as Rev. Jervis has noted) that there were other dangers. "Colbert, the leading statesman of the time, was quite capable of encouraging, if not suggesting a movement in that direction (i.e. toward schism); and Bossuet well knew that in French clerical assemblies there was no lack of men too ready to follow blindly a sudden impulse from high quarters, without perceiving or pausing to examine how far it was likely to carry them." See: Jervis, op. cit., II, p. 37-38.

it was indeed, that he was picked to deliver the inaugural sermon; no other member of the Assembly could approach his competence, and his earnest desire to instil moderation and prudent counsel into the proceedings. This of course was his greatest opportunity to serve the ends for which all his ideals were dedicated, and of which his writings will ever stand as witness; but the honour brought its own disadvantage. One could not stand in such a position without danger of personal animosity on the part of those even whose interests were being protected. Whatever the judgement of history, Bossuet accepted the task, and thereby made the choice which rendered his likely elevation to the purple an impossibility.⁸⁰

The idea of unity was most naturally the keynote of the great sermon, with which the Assembly opened on the 9th of November, 1681.⁸¹ It was as a result a masterpiece of diplomacy.

⁸⁰ There has been a great deal of speculation on this point, in an attempt to assess the action of Bossuet in the light of differing political views. Legendre in his Mémoires openly suggests that because of jealousy it was Harlai, Archbishop of Paris, who suggested the selection of Bossuet for the honour of delivering the opening sermon, knowing this would damage his cause completely. On this see: E.K. Sanders, op. cit., p. 192. "A prominent place in an enterprize which was intended to be offensive to the Pope was not likely to serve as a stepping stone to promotion, but Bossuet faced the difficulty with the composure that rarely failed him..... He was in favour at the Vatican as well as at Versailles, and he may have been sanguine enough to hope that the sincerity of his intentions would secure for him immunity from the dangers which encompassed other members of the Assembly. But it is equally true that personal anxiety held but a small place in his considerations as compared to his solicitude for the safety of the Faith and the welfare of France."

⁸¹ For an excellent and extended treatment of Bossuet's place in the Assembly generally, see: Gerin, L'Assemblée du Clergé, chapter XI ("Bossuet et l'Assemblée de 1682"); cf., Loyson, op. cit., chapters VII-X, which treat particularly of the Assembly itself, its composition, acts, etc., and Michaud, op. cit., chapters XVIII-XIX, treating the diplomatic side. All of these give extensive documentation.

Enlarging upon the compelling text, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel," he unfolded before his listners a vision of the earthly glory of the Church Universal and the indefectible character of the ancient and inviolable head, the successor to St. Peter.⁸² But, holding true to his beliefs, Bossuet pointed out how that commission conferred upon Peter had afterwards been granted to all the Apostles, so that it descends to the collective episcopate in all ages. Since the events which had led up to the occasion made it unavoidable that he touch upon the principles of the distinctiveness of the Gallican Church, Bossuet then attempted to uphold the ancient traditions of this Church without, however, "derogating in any way the true greatness and just authority of the See of Rome." As he wrote later:

"There are three particulars in which I have especially sought to avoid wounding the sensitive ears of the Romans: the temporal independence of kings, the jurisdiction of the episcopate as derived immediately from Jesus Christ, and the authority of Councils. These are matters upon which your Eminence knows that we do not equivocate in France; and I have studied to speak of them in such a way as to keep clear of any offence to the majesty of Rome, without sacrificing the real doctrine of the Gallican Church. More than this cannot be expected

⁸² For the full text of this famous sermon, see: M. Reamus, Histoire de Bossuet (Paris: 1869), p. 78ff. A few days before delivering this sermon Bossuet had written to the Pope in terms of profound humility, avowing his allegiance to that plenitude of power possessed by the Papacy. Correspondance, II, p. 265, under date of November, 1861. On this see: W.J.S. Simpson, A Study of Bossuet (London: 1937), p. 65. "It has been said that Bossuet's masterpiece of eloquence and skill was approved in Rome and only criticized in Paris. When the Pope heard that the Bishop of Meaux had called upon his hearers to strive against its slightest division from the Holy See he was reassured. Long afterwards Bossuet could say with justifiable pride that great cardinals had written to him from Rome to say that the Pope had read and approved his sermon."

of a French Bishop, who is compelled by circumstances to handle these topics. In one word, I have spoken plainly, for we are bound to do so at all times, and especially in the pulpit; but I have spoken with due respect, and God is my witness that I have acted with the best intentions." ⁸³

Bossuet was thus attempting, as far as it lay within his power, to treat the subject from the point of view of the ecclesiastic, and not in any sense give ear to the demands of the Political Gallicans. ⁸⁴ Bossuet was fearless in his statement, knowing the sincerity with which he approached the task, and thus he might write: "I would have preached in Rome what I said here with as much confidence as in Paris. For I think that truth can be spoken openly everywhere, provided that the discourse is tempered with discretion, and prompted by charity." ⁸⁵

Of the delicate relationship between the Gallican Church and the Holy See, he traces the historical development which

⁸³ Letter to Cardinal d'Estrees, December 1st (?), 1681. See: Correspondance, II, p. 278.

⁸⁴ As he said: "I was forced to speak of the liberties of the Gallican Church, and I governed what I said about them by two rules: (1) not to let them infringe in the slightest on the true greatness of the Holy See, and (2) to refer to them as they are understood by the Bishops and not as they are understood by the politicians... I may say that all who heard the sermon agreed that it inculcated peace and goodwill. If I may suppose it to be as effective in print as it was in delivery, I shall have cause to give infinite thanks to God." See: Correspondance, II, p. 276-7. With this letter (to Cardinal d'Estrees) Bossuet sent a copy of the Sermon, which he said had been read and approved by the King, and ordered printed by the Assembly.

⁸⁵ Letter to Francois Diroys, November 10th, 1681; Correspondence, II, p. 268. By the nature of the situation, however, it was bound to please neither party. "The Ultramontane regarded it as a torrent of vague eloquence when the occasion demanded a denunciation of infidelity; in the eyes of the militant Gallican, who desired a trumpet call that should serve as a challenge to Papalism, it failed completely of its purpose." See: J. de Maistre, Oeuvres, II, p. 281, quoted in E.K. Sanders, op. cit., p. 193.

confirmed time and again the independence of the French Church, and then of this he says:⁸⁶

"How necessary, then, to preserve at least that portion of the primitive disciplines which remain to us. If the bishops solicit from the Pope the inviolable observance of the canons, and of the power of ecclesiastical ordinaries in all its grades, let it be remembered that they are but following the footsteps of St. Louis and of Charlemagne, and imitating the saints whose sees they occupy. This is not to disjoin ourselves from the Holy See, God forbid; on the contrary, it is to sustain, down to its minutest ligaments, the organic coherence between the head and its members. This is not to lessen the plenitude of the Pontifical authority; the ocean itself has its appointed bounds; and were it to break through the limits, its plenitude would become a cataclysm which would engulf the universe....."

Here was a clear statement of Gallican principles which did not in essence contravene the established authority of the Pope, but aimed to preserve in a most succinct fashion the truths which had come down through the history of that Church in the Councils and in local tradition. It was not the principles.

⁸⁶ M. Reaume, loc. cit. With reference to the relations between the temporal and ecclesiastical power, Bossuet expresses himself with admirable judgement: "Woe to the Church when the two jurisdictions began to regard each other with jealous eyes. Why should division spring up between the minister of the Church and the ministers of sovereigns when both are alike ministers of the King of Kings, though constituted in a different manner? How can they forget that their functions are in fact identical; that to serve God is to serve the State, and that to serve the State is to serve God? But authority is blind; authority is ever seeking self-aggrandizement; authority thinks itself degraded when any attempt is made to fix its limits..." Then, with reference to the religious zeal of Louis XIV, in his attempt to put down heresy, which was a benefit to the whole church, he asks: "Why should a Pope of such known saintliness delay to unite himself to the most religious of monarchs? Such a Pontificate, so holy, so disinterested ought to be memorable above all things for peace, and for the fruits of peace; and these, I venture to predict, will be the humiliation of unbelievers, the conversion of heretics, and the reestablishment of discipline. Such are the objects of our desires; and if it were even necessary to make some sacrifice in order to realize such blessings, ought we to be afraid of being blamed for submitting to it?"

of the Reformation that Bossuet adhered to quite obviously; rather he became the spokesman of that principle of counciliar government which had attempted once to set proper bounds upon the excessive demands of the papacy, and which if it had been successful would have made the Reformation historically unnecessary.

When the Assembly got to the business for which it had been convened, no particular struggle ensued. Although the question of the régale which they had been called together to debate had no real claim on the importance it had assumed, it was undoubtedly the tone set by Bossuet in the sermon and his calm judgement in the deliberations that followed which overruled dangerous extremes.⁸⁷ In a sense what was effected was a compromise, though the bishops consented to recognize the general extension of régale as it had been originally declared. This could be thought of as a sacrifice on the part of the clergy (in the derogatory sense), or as a concession to the maintenance of peace. Seemingly most felt it to be the latter, but it does not demand extra perception (at least at this distance) to see that it was a sacrifice of a right which they had lost already

⁸⁷ Bossuet joined the rest of the Assembly in their compliance with the King's desires. This was not a reversal of position; he felt that the question was of less importance in itself, than some were making it out to be, although in principle he felt that the claim for régale was ill-founded and should never have been brought forward. See: Correspondance, II, p. 291f. (letter to F. Diroys, 29 December, 1681). Note his remark on the question in the Défense de la Declaration, Book iv, p. 264 (Oeuvres, Vol. XX): "Cette affaire est de petite importance." The question of régale had been bitterly contested in the days of Henry IV, but the times had changed, and now the ecclesiastics were in general making common cause with the crown. On this, see: Voltaire, Siècle de Louis XIV, Vol. II, chapter 35.

and which they did not actually regard as essential or indispensable.⁸⁸ What made this settlement acceptable, however, (almost in analogy with the investiture settlement) was the concession by the Crown to the spiritual jurisdiction, in that where nominations involved the cure of souls, the bishop of the diocese should have the right of canonical institution. Like the old problem of ring and staff, the settlement guaranteed the principle of Church authority and discipline, yet removed the restrictions upon the Crown.

The decisions of the Assembly were published in the form of a Royal Edict which regulated the future exercise of the right of régale, and an official Act bearing the signature of the members.⁸⁹ This was followed by a letter addressed to His Holiness, Innocent XI, the intention of which was not only to set forth what was done, but why, and expressing the hope that he might take a favourable view of their proceedings.⁹⁰ For some no amount of justification can make right what is considered essentially an evil; in this case the concession on the part of the clergy, because it contravened a principle, or because

⁸⁸ The right had been surrendered by the Church in the Concordat of 1516. See: note 63 supra.

⁸⁹ See the Act of the Clergy in E.A. Isambert, Recueil des anciennes lois françaises (Paris: 1822-33), Vol. XIX, p. 374.

⁹⁰ For the text of this letter, see: Correspondance (Appendix IV), II, p. 429. It was sincerely expected that the Pope should acquiesce without difficulty, and Bossuet was confident of it, when he wrote to F. Diroys (6 February, 1682): "As for the question of la Regale, it is no longer a question for discussion; you will see, by the letter which we have written to the Pope, that the matter has been thoroughly examined, and if I am not mistaken, successfully settled....." See: Correspondance, II, p. 296.

it was predicated upon base motives, will seem inexcusable. Whether ends justify means will be forever the dividing ground in Christian thought. But disregarding the crasser aspects of the situation, there was a very laudible truth in the statement the bishops made to the Pope, quoting Ivo of Chartres:⁹¹

"Even if the canons, taken in their strict application, were opposed to the concession which we have made, we should not have hesitated to make it, because the repose of the Church imperatively required it; for, inasmuch as charity is the fulfilment of the law, it is clear that we obey the law when we do what charity demands."

How much discord and unhappiness might have been avoided in the long history of the Church's misuse of her rightful power had this principle been applied; but it might be asked at what point does charity become sentimentality and concession weakness? There is something pathetic in the answer which finally came from Innocent XI, after nearly two months of ominous silence. He had the principle upon his side, and the accusation leveled at the worldly prelates can but stir our feelings of sympathy. And yet how far can the right be used to justify a wrong interpretation of that right? What happens to the good means used to justify bad ends?

Innocent, as we have noted, kept the letter of the Assembly unanswered for nearly two months, then replied with a torrent of indignant reproaches:⁹²

"The Bishops and Clergy of France, once the joy and crown of the Apostolic See, are now conducting themselves in a way which makes us sorrowfully repeat the complaint of the Prophet, 'The sons of my mother have fought against me'; though

⁹¹ Ivo, Bishop of Chartres (1091-1115) had worked to reconcile Philip I, to the Church. See his Epistola, number 190, quoted in the letter of the Bishops, Correspondance, loc. cit.

it is rather against yourselves that you are fighting, since the cause in hand involves nothing less than the safety and the liberty of the Gallican Church.... Your letter appears to be dictated by fear; a motive which never yet prompted bishops to be magnanimous in defence of religion and ecclesiastical discipline, courageous in attack, and constant in endurance. You have yielded to fear where you ought to have felt no fear..... It was for you to combine your efforts with the authority of the Apostolic See, and to plead the cause of your churches before the King with true pastoral energy and humility, even at the risk of exciting his irritations against you; that so you might be entitled to address God in the words of David, 'I have spoken of Thy testimonies even before kings, and have not been ashamed.'.....We do not see what right you have to say that you have been vanquished in discussion - that you have lost your cause. How can he have fallen who never stood upright? How can he have been defeated who never took the field? Which of you has vindicated in the king's presence a cause so weighty, so just, so sacred?.....as if spiritual franchises could be given away to the secular power by bishops, who ought to submit to bonds and imprisonment themselves rather than permit the Church to be enslaved."

But it was not alone with words that the Pope condemned the proceedings of the French clergy; he indeed proceeded to "apply such remedies as were placed in his hands by virtue of his spiritual authority." He thus concluded his condemnation by annulling all that had been done by the Assembly in the matter of the régale, as well as everything that had been done subsequent to that or in the time to come. The threats had been made good. But the question remained whether the matter would indeed bring about a schism as Bossuet had feared.

⁹² For the text and discussion see: M. Reaume, op. cit., p. 127ff. Cf., Loyson, op. cit., p. 332ff.

THE FOUR ARTICLES AND THEIR DEFENCE

VI.

The question of the régale has been settled; the Pope had been duly notified, and the nation awaited reply. The tone of that reply, when it finally came, was a clear denunciation of the action of the French Church. But this had been considerably heightened in its intent, by what had transpired in the interim. The silence of Innocent, we may imagine, bore hard upon those of more extreme views; they might well argue, as indeed they did, that since the Gallican Liberties had been infringed, the occasion should be taken to set forth a clear definition of those liberties. Bossuet had already issued a warning against those who might be willing to risk schism, but in this moment of greatest danger his task of peace-maker grew harder.⁹³

From what fragmentary evidence that exists, we may imagine by whom and for what reasons the move was made towards issuing such a declaration. Once again the inmost circle of court ecclesiastics and political advisors joined forces to effect their purposes.⁹⁴ It was the Archbishop of Rheims, the son of

⁹³ In this most delicate situation, Bossuet was well aware that some almost desired schism. In the Inaugural Sermon (see, supra note 82; cf., Oeuvres de Bossuet, Vol. XI, p. 588), Bossuet had already sounded a note of warning against those who should be so inclined. He urged the unwavering hold on continuity: "Let us not stray from the ways of our father followed. We must cling fast to the old system if we would hold to the old Faith." But the forces of opposition were strong. See: Bausset, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 375-380.

⁹⁴ We learn of the court intrigue from the Journal of the Abbé Lédieu, Bossuet's private secretary, who learned of the circumstances in a conversation with him in 1700. See: Memoires et Journal de l'Abbé Lédieu, ed. by Dr. Guette, Vol. II, p. 8; cf., Bausset, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 161.

The question of the League has been raised in the past, and has been only partially settled. The tone of that debate, when it finally came, was a clear, unambiguous action of the action of the French Republic. But this was not a consideration of the interest, by what had happened in the past. The silence of the past, we are inclined, bore hard upon those of more extreme views; they were well aware, as I have said, that since the Gallican Revolution had been completed, the occasion should be taken to set forth a clear definition of those liberties. Rousseau had already issued a warning against those who were willing to risk schism, but in this moment of greatest danger his task of peace-making grew harder.

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From what fragmentary evidence that exists, we may imagine by whom and for what reasons the move was made towards forming such a declaration. Once again the inner circle of court ecclesiastics and political advisors joined forces to attack their pursues. It was the Archbishop of Rheims, the son of

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In this most delicate situation, Rousseau was well aware that some action should be taken. In the Journal de Trévoux, Vol. VI, p. 284, Rousseau again notes: "The Council of Vannes, Vol. VI, p. 284, Rousseau had already attacked a host of writers against those who would be so inclined. He urged the unwavering hold on conviction: 'Let us not a step from the ways of our fathers followed. We must stand firm to the old system if we would hold to the old faith.' But the forces of opposition were strong. See Rousseau, Op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 375-380.

We learn of the coming letters from the Journal of the Abbé Leclerc, Rousseau's private secretary, who learned of the movement from a conversation with him in 1760. See Journal de Trévoux, Vol. VI, p. 284, Rousseau, Op. cit., Vol. I, p. 381.

Chancellor le Tellier, who first proposed the plan, and the Archbishop of Paris together with the King's Confessor, Pere La Chaise, took the matter directly to the King and obtained a royal order to proceed. In the background of course, stood Colbert, anxious to make the most of this period of discord to further the interests of the State.⁹⁵ Against such opposition there might seem little chance of success, but Bossuet did protest that to go to such lengths of formulating propositions already obnoxious in the eyes of the Holy See, would be the one sure way to drive the Pope to extremes and render reconciliation impossible.⁹⁶ The order had been obtained, however, and the Assembly moved toward the task of drawing up a formal Declaration of Gallican Liberties.⁹⁷

At this point the real dangers of the situation become apparent, as they must have to Bossuet in his anxiety, and once again he seized upon whatever opportunity his position afforded not only to maintain the best aspects of Gallican

⁹⁵ The time was particular propitious for Colbert, as a time of discord was bound to be; in times of peace and concord, the general desire to preserve good understanding, and the general reluctance to stir up strife would naturally tell against any such movement. On this see: Jervis, op. cit., p. 46-7.

⁹⁶ See: Correspondance, Vol. II, p. 295, "I (will) speak no more about the matter of the regale, nor of the resolutions of our Assembly which are public; one can easily judge what remains to be done by what has been done. I hope that in these grave circumstances we will not create new difficulties, and to this all people of good will must apply themselves..." (letter to F. Dieroy, 26 January, 1682.).

⁹⁷ In sort of a last-ditch stand, Bossuet proposed that preliminary to other measures an investigation of the traditions regarding the relations of France and Rome should be made. But the opposition saw through this temporizing.

principles, but also to become by the very nature of the situation, the sole defender of the Papacy. Fortunately it was indeed that he was trusted by all parties, and that he was able to maintain in the great struggle an outward composure which inspired such confidence. The real key to the situation however, depended upon the fact that among his intimates at the Assembly, whether by his own choice or prompted by the interests of diplomacy, were the very group who were demanding most loudly the extreme in all measures.⁹⁸

The moment of opportunity, the real point of crisis, finally came when among the inner committee selected to draw up the form of the Declaration the choice of one to set down in writing the decisions of the group fell upon an extremist. In the discussions that followed, we can only guess as to the actual part played by Bossuet who had been included in the group by that good fortune which seems to have guided all his actions. A general disagreement arose as to the form of the Declaration, and the resultant breach among the members brought Bossuet once more into the position of arbiter, upon whom, fittingly enough, finally devolved this most delicate task of presenting to the world a summary of Gallican doctrine.

Had the course of events been determined in line with the wishes of those extremists who had been originally responsible

⁹⁸ On this see; Sanders, op. cit., p. 195-6. Cf., Jervis, op. cit., p. 48; there is a blank in Bossuet's correspondence at this point, and the only clue we have to the state of the negotiations are drawn from the memoirs of Ledieu (his secretary). There is also an interesting account of what happened by Fenelon, in his treatise De Summi Pontificis auctoritate (in Oeuvres de Fenelon, Vol. I, p. 659), who said he heard the details from Bossuet himself.

for the Assembly, nothing short of schism could have resulted, most certainly wholesale excommunication. We may imagine that it had required courage for Bossuet to take the initiative in delivering the inaugural sermon; but the degree to which this involved personal danger, and certainly outright disfavour on the part of the Papacy whose interests he was sincerely seeking to uphold, could not be compared with this new danger. He had been defeated in his attempt to forestall action, but now, faced with a choice he was not inclined to let the opportunity go by of dictating himself the particular form of Gallican doctrine.

In the face of almost hopeless antagonism between the Gallican Church and the Papacy, Bossuet led the way to a statement which would neither compromise the one nor derogate the other; it was his consummate artistry, his learning, and his calm judgement which produced the famous Four Articles.⁹⁹ Here was set forth the following points:

1. Kings and princes are not subject to any ecclesiastical power, with respect to their temporal government.
2. The Pope is below a General Council.
3. The ancient rules, customs, and institutions received by the realm and Church of France remain inviolable.

⁹⁹ In the discussions of the committee, it had been decided to revive (in substance) the Six Articles formulated by the Sorbonne. See page 30, *supra*. It had been the form in which these were presented to the group which caused dissension and the disapproval of Bossuet, but it was these same articles that Bossuet himself used as his point of departure. For the text of the Articles, see: Isambert, *op. cit.*, Vol. XIX, p. 82. For the exhaustive treatment of this subject, of the circumstances of the Assembly, Bossuet's place in it, and the Articles, see: Loyson, *op. cit.*, chapter IX; Reaume, *op. cit.*, chapter XI; and Gerin, *op. cit.*, chapter X. Texts are given in each; a copy has been appended to this study.

4. The Pope has the principal place in deciding questions of faith.

The articles were incorporated in a Déclaration which explained that these opinions had been formulated for the assistance of the Church of France, "in order that we may all speak the same thing and concur in the same doctrine."¹⁰⁰ This was the 19th of March, 1682; on the 23d the King decreed that in his dominions their acceptance should be counted obligatory.¹⁰¹

Bossuet had thus succeeded in presenting a skillful compromise and it is probably that he was justified in believing that his presentation of Gallican doctrine had the support of the Church of France. In fact, he of all others, with his learning and his intense conviction, was eminently fitted to serve as the representative of his party and the service he rendered to the nation in the full effect of his intervention in the counsels of the Assembly are quite beyond calculation. By this very fact also, "he was of infinite service to Rome," for there were many who had been bent upon carrying matters to dangerous extremes.¹⁰² The Articles are a clear assertion of Gallican belief, but at

¹⁰⁰ Jervis, op. cit., II, p. 51. The Déclaration had been signed by 68 members of the Assembly (34 bishops and as many of the second order); it was then presented to the King, who ordered it registered by the Parlement. An Edict was then issued enjoining that the Articles should be taught in all the colleges and in every University, and to be subscribed by all Professors of Theology. The Archbishops and Bishops were likewise admonished to proceed with the enforcement. Isambert, loc. cit.

¹⁰¹ The famous brief of Innocent XI, noted above (page 57), was issued on 11 April, 1682; the action of the Assembly had indeed given him cause for reproach.

¹⁰² Ledieu, Memoires, p. 175, quoted in Sanders, op. cit., p. 198. His services were not of the kind to inspire sentiments of gratitude, however.

the same time they steer clear of the extremer forms of that position.

Little remains to be recounted concerning the Assembly, or of the Articles. Although the brief of Innocent XI most vehemently condemned everything that the Assembly had done or might do, an action that brought the violent spirits to a point even more mutinous, the King had in a sense obtained what he wanted and might be content to let the statement of principles suffice for his purposes.¹⁰³ We cannot be sure, but this consideration, together with an apparent awakening to the great peril of a threatened Bull of Excommunication opened the way to the exercise of self-control and moderation.¹⁰⁴ A letter of reply to the Pope, adopted by the prelates and intended to be circulated throughout the nation was recalled at the desire of the King even before its publication, and the sittings of the Assembly were suspended, at first temporarily but in point of fact indefinitely.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ On this, see: Bausset, op. cit., p. 398ff.

¹⁰⁴ The gravity of the situation is perhaps best characterized by a contemporary from England, who mirrors the common concern: "The old resolute Pope sent a curier to France to the Nuntio with a Bull of Excommunication, which he required him to carry into the Assembly, and there to fulminate in his name against all the Assembly. This came to the knowledge of Cardinal d'Estree, who, to prevent the ill effects of so hardy a step, sent presently a curier with a strict charge to use all possible haste to get before the Pope's curier so the King might have timely notice of what the other was bringing, and this is now known to be the true reason for that sudden adjournment." Letter of Gilbert Burnet, quoted in Sanders, op. cit., p. 199.

¹⁰⁵ On the course of events at this point and subsequently, see: Loyson, op. cit., p. 455ff., and an extensive treatment in Gerin, op. cit., pp. 374-517. Bossuet apparently felt that the work of the Assembly was incomplete, that further deliberation would surely clarify the issues and gain the approval of the Holy See. Cf., Correspondance, II, p. 309f.

For his part, Innocent continued to maintain a threatening attitude, but the most likely project of a judicial censure against the obnoxious Articles was eventually abandoned. This however did not mean the end of hostilities, and to testify his open displeasure he refused to ratify all ecclesiastical appointments made by the King from among those who had been members of the Assembly.¹⁰⁶ So strictly was this carried out that by 1689 thirty-five sees were vacant because of un-canonically instituted appointees. Neither had the rumours of rebellion ceased to disturb the peace of the French Church.¹⁰⁷ The greatest danger, that of an open schism with the Holy See which Bossuet had struggled so earnestly to prevent, was otherwise successfully avoided, and the Church of France (still jealously guarding the ancient privileges) remained technically obedient to the spiritual jurisdiction of the Papacy.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ As Bossuet wrote (October 30, 1682, to Abbe de Rance), "The affairs of the Church are going on very badly. The Pope threatens us with constitutions of an outrageous kind, and even, it is said, with new formularies of faith. Goodness of intention combined with small enlightenment, is a great evil in such an exalted position. Let us pray, let us weep." Correspondance, II, p. 331.

¹⁰⁷ "The thing that in all the world is most desired, and which is really the most important at the present juncture, is the death of the Pope." This was the opinion of Mme. de La Fayette in 1689. See: Memoires (Petitot), Vol. LXV, p. 115. On this, see: Jervis, op. cit., p. 54. "Vague rumours were set afloat that the form of Papal institution was to be dispensed with for the future, and that French bishops were to be consecrated according to the ancient rule, by the metropolitans without any application for license to a foreign power. Louis XIV however, contented himself with directing that, since the Pope declined to grant institution to some of his nominees, he should not be solicited to bestow it in the case of others...." And so the situation remained in abeyance until the final rapprochement in 1693.

¹⁰⁸ With his usual wisdom, Bossuet was able to assess the real cause of the difficulties, as they were developing in the

Perhaps no aspect of these proceedings, is more worthy of notice than the fact that the Declaration leaves room for Bossuet's own personal opinion, already expressed in the opening sermon, that the See of Rome, though not infallible, is "indefectible": not necessarily right at any particular moment, it cannot fall permanently into error. It had been this question which split the committee of the Assembly, and presented the opportunity to Bossuet.¹⁰⁹ It was to be the keystone of his defence against those who attacked the Declaration.

This attack came from all sides and was strengthened by the diversity of opinion then existing within the Roman Church itself as between old-line "orthodox" upholders of Papal

Ultramontane sentiment and in Papal infallibility. As he wrote to F. Diroys (28 October, 1682): "Your picture of the present state of things at Rome makes me tremble. What? Is Bellarmine to be all in all, and monopolize in his own person the whole Catholic tradition? Where are we if such is the case, and if the Pope is about to condemn whatever that author condemns? Hitherto this has never been attempted; they have not dared to impugn the Council of Constance, nor the Popes who approved it. What answer are we to make to the heretics, when they throw this Council in our teeth and appeal to its decrees, reaffirmed as they were at Basel with the express approbation of Pope Eugenius IV? If Eugenius did right in solemnly approving those decrees, how can they be attacked? and if he did wrong, what becomes, they will ask, of this pretended infallibility? Are we to get rid of the authority of all these decrees, and of so many other decrees ancient and modern, by means of scholastic distinctions, and the sophistries of Bellarmine? Is the Church, which up to this time has stopped the mouths of heretics with irrefutable arguments, now to be reduced to defend herself by such pitiful equivocations? God forbid!....." Correspondance, II, p. 317f.

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It has been stated in the draft declaration that the Holy See as well as an individual Pope, was liable to fall into heresy. This Bossuet denied, and maintained that both from the promises of Scripture and from universal tradition, the "faith of Peter can never fail from the seat of his Divinely-ordained authority." When it was objected that this was the same as infallibility, Bossuet distinguished between this, and what he called indefectibility; the See of Peter is "indefectible in holding the true faith; but the particular decisions of each reigning Pope are not incapable of error." See: Jervis, op. cit., p. 48.

There is no such thing as a free lunch, and we must work for it.

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authority, and the growing power of the Ultramontanists. Bossuet may have misjudged the forces of opposition which were stubbornly ranged against the French Church in its particular move. To be sure Innocent had not gone to extremes, but he did continue to show himself quite intractable. The real position of Bossuet following the dismissal of the Assembly can only be appreciated, however, when one has come to understand the principles for which he struggled. Most important of all, unless he denied outright the faith in the form that he had professed and taught it, there was nothing left to do but uphold Gallican opinion. Even if it had been possible to withdraw from active participation in the clerical deliberations, it was the sincere desire to proclaim that which he believed to be the truth that made it impossible for him to remain silent, and convinced him that his action had been justifiable.¹¹⁰ Events as they developed gave him his place, and he accepted it, but this had not been according to his wishes. He had considered the Declaration ill-timed, but when he framed the Four Articles he had no uncertainty concerning their orthodoxy.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ Writing about his friend Le Camus (Bishop of Grenoble), who refused his explanations, he showed for once a bit of the human nature which desired approval: "Perhaps as I wrote to him about the interest of the Church he does not wish to discuss that subject with me; perhaps he disapproves my action....perhaps he is not altogether fair with me. The foundation of truth being saved, the rest is of that nature which St. Paul allows to be decided by the mind of each, and I have not as yet felt any self-reproach regarding my own conduct." Correspondance, II, p. 272.

¹¹¹ See: Jervis, op. cit., p. 51-2. "The studied moderation, and withal the strict theological precision which characterize this Gallican manifesto, deserve the highest praise. The language was so carefully chosen, and the doctrine so unobscurely identical with that which the Church, by the mouth of her most illustrious teachers, had sanctioned in all ages, that no one occupying the Chair of Peter could venture to openly repudiate them."

Bossuet had wished to enlarge upon the subject matter of the Declaration when it was circulated in France, but this had been refused, and only later, when a succession of writers openly denounced the Gallican statement, did he return to his intention of setting out a reasoned defence.¹¹² The final result was the famous Defensio Declarationis Cleri Gallicani, the most elaborate expression of Bossuet's thought ever committed to writing. Upon this work he was engaged some three years, and completed it in the original form in 1685.¹¹³ But there were strong reasons for not having it brought before the public immediately; Louis XIV was at that time actively negotiating for a settlement with the Papacy, and such a treatise might well have given additional grievance. Bossuet had other tasks in hand, and, having given shape to the arguments for Gallican belief, he was content to wait for a summons to publish it.

But the adversaries of Gallicanism were not content to let the matter remain in abeyance, and in 1695 the most notable of all the attacks upon the Four Articles was launched by Roccaberti, Archbishop of Valencia.¹¹⁴ It was in response to this open challenge that Bossuet decided to undertake a refutation. This great work, the Gallia Orthodoxa was joined as a preliminary

¹¹² For a list and discussion of all the various published attacks against the Declaration, see: Jervis, op. cit., p. 56.

¹¹³ It was written in Latin, but published simultaneously with a French translation, but not until after the death of Bossuet, when (as noted here) all danger of offense to the Papacy had passed away (in 1745). It is included in the Oeuvres de Bossuet, Volume XX.

¹¹⁴ Bossuet describes this as the most bitter of all his opponents. The work, De Pontificia Potestate was prohibited in France by order of the Parlements. See: Jervis, loc. cit.

dissertation to the original Defense of Gallicanism. Here is to be found the fruits of a lifetime of study; it was no longer merely a defense of the Four Articles, but in the attack of the Archbishop, Bossuet was being called to stand as the champion of faith in Gallicanism itself as it had been given to each successive age.

As we have noticed in the course of this study, the forces which did actually stand in opposition to Bossuet and the principles he represented, were those which took as the standard of their claim the pronouncements of Innocent III and of Boniface VIII. The controversy was thus an old one, maintaining as it did all the features of the Empire-Papacy struggle on the question of Investiture (in the problem of régale), as well as gathering together all the remnants of opinion which had struggled against the Papacy in the Counciliar Movement. At base of course, the controversy on Gallican principles was concerned with the limits of the authority of the Roman See toward the State on the one hand, and toward the Episcopate on the other. Bossuet had supported the Four Articles, concerned as they were with the independent authority of the State within its own sphere, by insisting that the secular power was derived from God and wielded a sword (to use the popular language) equal in authority to that of the Papacy.¹¹⁵ The State was supreme in temporal affairs, as the Church was in things spiritual; the head of the State might be excommunicated by the Church, but not dethroned. In other words, the effect of the excommunication

¹¹⁵ This had been the thesis of the Politique, and remained Bossuet's chief argument against the Ultramontanists.

was spiritual but did not alter temporal rights and position, and Bossuet was able to show from a long list of historical instances in the tradition of the Church and the writings of the Fathers how the authorities acknowledged their obligation to the secular power within its rightful sphere.¹¹⁶

The limits of the spiritual authority as they impinge upon the secular power could not ever be discussed without reference to the famous bull Unam Sanctam of Boniface VIII, with which Bossuet dealt in a most subtle way.¹¹⁷ He insisted that a distinction had to be drawn between what the Pope might "relate" and what he "defined." The submission of every human applied obviously to salvation, but it could not be affirmed in temporal affairs.¹¹⁸

In the Gallia Orthodoxa which Bossuet prefaced to his larger Defensio Declarationis, the problem of the authority of the Roman See is attacked directly. To appreciate the position taken here, and particularly the motivating force behind Gallican thought, it is necessary to remember the extremes to which the Ultramonte school were developing the theories of papal power. Not only was the Church to be considered a spiritual monarchy, absolute in its authority,

¹¹⁶ Note especially the writings of Tertullian, quoted in note 19 supra.

¹¹⁷ The pertinent statement in this bull was that, "We therefore declare, say, and affirm that submission on the part of every man to the Bishop of Rome is altogether necessary for his salvation." See: Thatcher & McNeal, Source Book for Medieval History (New York: 1905), p. 314.

¹¹⁸ See: Defensio Declarationis (Oeuvres de Bossuet, vol. XX), chapter xxiv.

was availed but did not after several trials and position, and desired was able to draw from a box full of instances in the position of the up and the witness of the Father how the authorities acknowledged their obligation to the secular power within its rightful sphere. 110

The limits of the spiritual authority as they involve upon the secular power could not even be discussed without reference to the famous bull Unam Sanctam of Boniface VIII, with which Bonaventura dealt in a most subtle way. 111. It is evident that a distinction had to be drawn between what the Pope might "relate" and what he "defined." The submission of every applied obviously to salvation, but it could not be affirmed in temporal affairs. 112

In the Galilei controversy which Bonaventura referred to this latter regard to hierarchical, the problem of the authority of the Pope is attacked directly. He considered the

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113. More especially the writings of Gratian, viewed in note 10 page 114.

114. The persistence of dissent in this bull was noted, "the presence of dissent, and still that distinction in a bull of every man to the Bishop of Rome is acknowledged necessary for his authority." See: Unam Sanctam, cited above in footnote 113. (New York: 1901), p. 21.

115. See: Unam Sanctam (Unam Sanctam) (New York: 1901), vol. 1, page 21.

but to the head of that Church was also to be deferred the exclusive control of the Keys, the right of infallible pronouncement superior to the action of General Councils, and an authority for judgement of the temporal power of princes.¹¹⁹ What seemed to hold a prominent place in Bossuet's thinking, however, was the extraordinary contrast between these ideas and the actual history through which the Papacy had passed. He could not help but revert in thought to the time of the Great Schism, when rival Popes promulgated mutual excommunications, and that at the Council of Constance there had been no other way to restore unity than for the Council to supersede the Pope.¹²⁰ Great as was the authority which the bishops might willingly recognize in the Apostolic See, they were still not prepared to acknowledge the claims of the Ultramontanists, and many theologians did not hesitate to maintain publically that faith could be judged only by a decision of the Universal

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The Ultramontane doctrine had been set forth by a contemporary writer in the following points:

1. The Church is a spiritual monarchy, absolute and independent.
2. The Pope, as head of the Church, has exclusive control of the Keys.
3. The power of the bishops proceeds from and is dependent upon his.
4. He is infallible.
5. He is superior to the Councils.
6. He alone holds the right to summon and to authorize them.
7. He has authority, albeit indirectly, over the temporal powers of Christian princes.

These appeared in a treatise, Le Bouclier de la France (1691) attributed to the Archbishop of Lyons, and are quoted in Sanders, op. cit., p. 202.

¹²⁰ Bossuet held as valid the famous decree of the Council, that it had been lawfully assembled, and had its power directly from Christ, even over the Pope. The pertinent passage is quoted in note 37 supra.

Church which alone could not err.

Bossuet found, moreover, that the extremists of the group advocated the theory that episcopal jurisdiction was derived through the successors of St. Peter. This theory he most emphatically rejected, for he was convinced that the episcopate enjoyed an authority given by Christ, and that when it acted in Council assembled, it pronounced with the guidance and authority of the Holy Spirit, and not of the Pope.¹²¹ He called attention with particular forcefulness to the fact that Christ, who said to Peter, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind," said also to the Apostles collectively, "Whatsoever ye shall bind."¹²² The history of the Church, furthermore, knew nothing of a derived authority for some twelve centuries.

Bossuet was equally convinced that the Ultramontane theory which concentrated final authority entirely in the hands of the Pope, would render the General Councils of none effect.¹²³ On the words of Christ to St. Peter, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren," Bossuet declared that it was clearly personal to St. Peter, and had not been in any way addressed to his

¹²¹ This is very closely akin to the Eastern Church doctrine of Sobornist, which equates "the Church" with the bishops in "council assembled." On this see: J. Bulkakov, The Orthodox Church.

¹²² Matthew 16:19 and 18:18.

¹²³ He felt that to say the Councils were "useful" because the Pope ought not to ignore the use of human means, or that such assemblies were effective means of enforcing the utterances of the "one Infallible Voice" was to reduce the episcopate to a position of consultor and advisor, whereas in fact they were judges in their own right, with a decisive voice. This point is further developed in the Defensio, book xxii.

successors.¹²⁴ The real meaning, if one were to apply this prayer to the ages at all, was that the faith of the Catholic Church should not fail.

Thus Bossuet drew a distinction between the Roman See and the occupant of that See. In the Roman See the faith of the Church would never fail, although the faith of the occupant might at times be found to falter. This was Bossuet's theory of indefectibility, as opposed to infallibility, which he held could be clearly demonstrated from history. It could not be denied that Popes from time to time in critical moments did actually falter, but that occasional lapses such as these did not change the fact that the faith remained permanently in the See itself.¹²⁵

Bossuet was convinced moreover, from his study of history, that many scholars and theologians had held in suspense their judgement concerning various Pontifical degrees, even where these concerned the faith - until the consent of the Church Catholic had been given either tacitly or by direct enactment. Thus it might be logical to say both that the See of Peter was subject to the Universal Church and its representative the General Council, and that at the same time supreme over the

¹²⁴ Luke 22:32.

¹²⁵ See note 109 supra. Cf., Sander, op. cit., p. 82: "Pope Liberius, whether he signed an Arian Creed or failed to defend the truth, did certainly for a space fail to maintain the faith. Above all there were the facts about Pope Honorius, condemned as a heretic and anathematized by General Councils of the Church." There is a wealth of writing on this, particularly on the case of Honorius. See: F. Chapman, The condemnation of Pope Honorius (London: 1907); L.P. Renouf, The Condemnation of Pope Honorius (London: 1868); and E.F. Willis, Pope Honorius and the Roman Dogma (London: 1879).

separate churches.¹²⁶ This was the doctrine that he claimed had been enunciated by the Council of Constance, taught and maintained in Gallican principles by the School of Paris.

The weightiness of the historical evidence assembled in these treatises can hardly be equalled, except as they were amplified and popularized by the pen of that eminent scholar Dr. Dollinger in his attacks upon the Vatican Council of 1870, and his writings condemning Papal infallibility generally.¹²⁷ Bossuet's work was given a notable tribute, even by one of his most scholarly opponenets, Cardinal Orsi. He acknowledged that Bossuet had based his argument on Catholic principles accepted by all everywhere. Further, he admitted that the Gallican doctrine was truly Catholic, and that few could henceforth attempt to reject what Bossuet had declared. And the cardinal was led to openly express his admiration for the arguments, saying: "I have heard both at Rome and elsewhere, many persons distinguished for their virtue, learning and experience, declare that after having perused this work of Bossuet's with the uttmost attention, they were convinced that Roman theologians ought no longer to persist in maintaining the cause which he impugns, but that it must be abandoned as desperate, since it was impossible to find arguments wherewith to combat truths so transparently clear."¹²⁸

¹²⁶ The point is given an extensive treatment in the Defensio, chapters lxxx and lxxxi.

¹²⁷ See his Papst-fabeln des Mittelalters (Stuttgart: 1890), and the Pope and the Council (Boston: 1870), written under the pseudonym of Janus.

¹²⁸ Bausset, Histoire de Bossuet, Vol. II, p. 428.

Finally, it was Pope Benedict XIV in a letter written in 1748, who observes:¹²⁹

"A few years ago a work was published, the object of which was to support the propositions adopted by the clergy of France in the Assembly of 1682. Although the name of the author is not given, all the world knows that it was composed by Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux. In the time of our immediate predecessor, Clement XII, it was seriously debated whether this work ought to be proscribed; but it was finally determined that no censure should be passed upon it. This decision was arrived at, not only out of regard for the author's memory, who in other respects so worthily served the cause of religion, but also out of just apprehension of provoking fresh dissertations and renewing the dispute."

The curious fact remains that the most complete collection of arguments against Papal Infallibility in existence comes from the pen of one of the ablest Bishops of the Roman Church.

¹²⁹ Bausset, op. cit., II, p. 429.

APPENDIX

SIX ARTICLES FORMULATED BY THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY
ASSEMBLED AT THE SORBONNE, MAY 1663:

1. It is in no way the doctrine of the Faculty that the sovereign pontiff has any authority over the temporalities of kings.
2. It is the doctrine of the Faculty that the Most Christian King owes his temporalities to God alone; that this is its ancient teaching from which it will never depart.
3. That the subjects of the king owe him an allegiance and an obedience from which they can not be dispensed under any circumstances.
4. That the same Faculty does not approve and has never approved of any propositions contrary to the authority of the king, the liberties of the Gallican Church and the canons received in the kingdom, for example that the Pope can depose bishops against these same canons.
5. That it is not the doctrine of the Faculty that the Pope is above the Council.
6. That it is also not the doctrine of the Faculty that the Pope is infallible without any consent of the Church.

DECLARATIO CLERI GALLICANI

("Four Articles of Gallicanism" drawn up by Bossuet, accepted by the episcopate on March 19, 1682, and imposed upon the French clergy)

There are many who labour to subvert the Gallican decrees and liberties which our ancestors defended with so much zeal and their foundations which rest upon the sacred canons and the traditions of the Fathers. Nor are there wanting those who, under the pretext of these liberties, seek to derogate from the primacy of St. Peter and of the Roman pontiffs his successors; from the obedience which all Christians owe to them, and from the majesty of the Apostolic See, in which the faith is taught and the unity of the faith is preserved. The heretics, on the other hand, omit nothing in order to represent that power by which the peace of the Church is maintained as intolerable both to kings and their subjects; and by such artifices estrange the souls of the simple from the communion of the Church, and therefore from Christ. With a view to remedy such evils, we, the archbishops and bishops assembled at Paris by the King's orders, representing together with the other deputies the Gallican Church, have judged it advisable, after mature deliberation, to determine and declare as follows:

1. St. Peter and his successors, vicars of Christ, and likewise the Church itself, have received from God power in things spiritual and pertaining to salvation, but not in things temporal and civil; inasmuch as the Lord says, 'My kingdom is not of this world'; and again, 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesars', and unto God the things which are God's.' The Apostolic precept also holds, 'Let every soul be subject unto higher powers, for there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God: whosoever therefore resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God.' Consequently the kings and princes are not by the law of God subject to any ecclesiastical power, nor to the keys of the Church, with respect to their temporal government. Their subjects can not be released from the duty of obeying them, nor absolved from the oath of allegiance; and this maxim, necessary to public tranquility, and not less advantageous to the Church than to the State, is to be strictly maintained, as conformable to the word of God, the tradition of the Fathers, and the example of the Saints.

II. The plenitude of power in things spiritual, which resides in the Apostolic See and the successors of St. Peter, is such that at the same time the decrees of the ecumenical Council of Constance, in its fourth and fifth sessions, approved as they are by the Holy See and the practice of the whole Church, remain in full force and perpetual obligations; and the Gallican Church does not approve the opinion of those who would deprecate the said decrees as being of doubtful authority, insufficiently approved, or restricted in their application to a time of schism.

III. Hence the exercise of the Apostolic authority must be regulated by the canons enacted by the Spirit of God and consecrated by the reverence of the whole world. The ancient rules, customs, and institutions received by the realm and Church of France remain likewise inviolable; and it is for the honour and glory of the Apostolic See that such enactments, confirmed by the consent of the said See and of the Churches, should be observed without deviation.

IV. The Pope has the principal place in deciding questions of faith, and his decrees extend to every church and all churches; but nevertheless his judgement is not irreversible until confirmed by the consent of the Church.

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